

Who has the Right to Write? University Custodians and the Practice of Literacy

By  
Calley (Catherine) Marotta

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The dissertation is approved by the following members of the Final Oral Committee:

Kate Vieira, Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction

Christa Olson, Associate Professor, Composition and Rhetoric

Mariana Pacheco, Associate Professor, Curriculum and Instruction

Morris Young, Professor, Composition and Rhetoric

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## Abstract

In my dissertation, “Who has the Right to Write? University Custodians and the Practice of Literacy,” I trace the literacy practices of six Latinx immigrant writers who work as custodians in a predominantly white public university. Drawing from my observations of and interviews with participants, my dissertation updates current theorizations of writing and labor (Brandt, *The Rise*; Kahn et al.) to account for the experiences of workers who are essential to the production of university literacies yet less often reap the institution’s literacy benefits. Using a critical race (Ahmed; Ladson-Billings; Martinez, Yosso et al.) approach to literacy sponsorship (Brandt, *Literacy*), I demonstrate how a university regulates and restricts participants’ writing through systems of surveillance, limited access, and retribution in order to maintain itself as a white dominant space. I also show how participants respond to these restrictions by employing non-normative workplace writing practices like using tattoos and voice-to-text technologies for their own purposes. Although these practices do not align with current conceptions of workplace writing, they fly under the radar of institutional regulation precisely because they are not recognized as a threat to institutional race and class hierarchies. This dissertation highlights the role workplace writing plays in reifying racial stratification; but it also reimagines workplace writing as a means to challenge white dominance in workplaces like education institutions.

Chapter 1: “Writing, Labor, and Race in the Information Economy” offers a critical race (Bell; Ladson-Billings; Martinez; Yosso et al.) approach to literacy sponsorship (Brandt, *Literacy*) to center race- and class-based stratification in studies of writing labor. Each subsequent chapter focuses on the particular workplace conditions racialized university laborers negotiate to use literacies for their own purposes. Chapter 2: “Custodian Writing and White Property in the University” (*College English*, 2019) argues that participants negotiate

constructions of writing as white property (Bell; Harris; Prendergast) in order to gain ownership in the university. This chapter intervenes in current discussions about workplace writing to show that, as writing is increasingly contested property in the information economy, it is also increasingly constructed as white. Chapter 3: “Non-regulated Writing” (*Research in the Teaching of English*, forthcoming) theorizes non-regulated writing to trace the way participants challenge institutional definitions of writing to express themselves in a regulated work context. This chapter intervenes in current workplace writing scholarship by calling for an expanded definition of workplace writing with implications for racial justice in institutions of education (Patton). And Chapter 4: “Portable Literacies” draws from transnational literacy studies (Fraiberg et al; Lorimer Leonard) to argue participants learn via portable literacies. This chapter contributes the term portable literacies to describe the self-sponsored, informal learning that is rarely recognized within educational institutions but that participants use to pursue their own learning agenda. Chapter 5: “The Right to Write as an Expressive Workplace Practice” outlines pedagogical and policy implications for writing teachers, university staff, and higher education administrators to inform a more racially just conception of workplace writing in and beyond institutions of higher education.

This study has implications for composition pedagogy and expands conceptions of race in relation to literacy scholarship. It offers an expanded and critical conception of workplace writing that bridges composition ideals around expression (Goldblatt), the experienced exploitation of current workplace writers (Findlay), and anti-racist pedagogies. It highlights the role that workplace writing plays in reifying race and class hierarchies in workplaces like education institutions and suggests a reconceptualization of workplace writing is necessary on the part of all university actors to challenge institutional white dominance.

## Chapter 1

### Introduction: Writing, Labor, and Race in the Information Economy

Although U.S. colleges and universities claim to distribute the benefits of writing more or less democratically, they are also workplaces that generate revenue from writing labor. This revenue, writing studies scholars have argued, increasingly results from exploited and contingent writing labor (Bousquet; Kahn et al.; Schell; Scott). Writing studies scholars have highlighted how such deteriorating labor conditions<sup>1</sup> disproportionately affect scholars of color (Schell and More) in ways that reflect broader race and class stratification within higher education. At a time when almost half of United States undergraduates are people of color, nearly 80% of full-time faculty are white (National Center for Education Statistics)<sup>2</sup>. This scholarship has importantly exposed a vast racial and pay disparity in college faculty, the implications of which reify white dominance in institutions of higher education. What these conversations have yet to address, however, is the way university writing work is also shaped by race- and class-based stratification at the lowest ranks of university labor.<sup>3</sup>

As a *College and University Professional Association for Human Resources* article reports: “Racial/ethnic minorities are underrepresented in higher ed staff for all but service/maintenance positions”—an area in which they hold 40% of positions (Bichsel and

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<sup>1</sup> These conditions include low-wages, poor benefits, and little institutional support (Birmingham).

<sup>2</sup> “Of all full-time faculty in degree-granting postsecondary institutions in fall 2016, 41 percent were White males; 35 percent were White females; 6 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander males; 4 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander females; 3 percent each were Black males, Black females, and Hispanic males; and 2 percent were Hispanic females, 1 Those who were American Indian/Alaska Native and those who were of Two or more races each made up 1 percent or less of full-time faculty in these institutions” (National Center for Education Statistics).

<sup>3</sup> One important exception here is the work of Marko et al., a collective of students, staff, and custodial workers, who examine discrepancies between the literacy practices valued in students and custodial staff at Emerson College.

McChesney).<sup>4</sup> While many universities collect data on their workforce profile, I have yet to find any institutional data that specifically tracks the racial and ethnic breakdown of workers according to classes of work. This absence raises questions about an institutional and even national investment in maintaining race- and class-based stratification. And in light of the mission of public universities that claim they are committed to equitable literacy distribution, this stratification also raises questions about how those who hold positions as service and maintenance workers use and experience literacy.

In this dissertation, *Who has the Right to Write? University Custodians and the Practice of Literacy*, I use qualitative methods to trace the literacy practices and experiences of six Latinx immigrant<sup>5</sup> writers who work as custodians<sup>6</sup> in a public university. I specifically center the writing experiences of university laborers who ensure the functioning of a powerful public literacy institution but who are less often recognized as writers. Their stories—those of Henry<sup>7</sup>, Tomás, Roberto, Marco, Javier, and Jesus—highlight the inequitable distribution of literacies in the university context and the negotiations required for them to pursue their literacy desires. Drawing from a year-long study based on participant-observations, interviews, and video and photographs taken by participants, I forward two main claims: first, I argue that, despite claiming to be a public literacy institution, the university constructs writing in ways that restrict

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<sup>4</sup> Racially minoritized staff members are better represented in some types of positions than in others, holding about 40 percent of service and maintenance positions versus only 16 percent of skilled craft positions.

<sup>5</sup> I use the term immigrant here to describe participants who reside in the United States and have a different nation of origin, but I also wish to emphasize how participants' immigrant status is racialized. In other words, I want to consider how structural racism affects this group because they are non-white.

<sup>6</sup> While participants generally referred to the activities involved in their work as cleaning, several participants referred to their position "in custodial" as in their department or category of work. I have chosen to use this category to describe their position because I focus on the institutional conditions and constructions associated with the class of work.

<sup>7</sup> All participants' names are pseudonyms and they were given the option to choose their own pseudonym.

participants from engaging in the university's public literacy mission. Specifically, I argue the university constructs writing in ways that maintain institutional race and class hierarchies through surveillance, retribution, and limited access to writing materials. Second, I argue that participants respond to these restrictions by employing non-regulated writing practices that fly under the radar of institutional regulation because they do not align with institutional definitions of writing. For example, participants wear tattoos, use voice-to-text technology, and negotiate hierarchies in order to write for their own purposes within their regulated work context. Accounting for such experiences reveals how workplace writing becomes a means of controlling and maintaining the university as a white dominant space by denying non-white workers opportunities to bring their knowledges and narratives to bear upon the institution.

### **Experiences of Workplace Writing in the Information Economy**

In the current information economy, writing has become a means of circulating and accumulating profit (Brandt, *The Rise*; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*). Within this current U.S. context, writing studies scholars have argued that workers face increasingly compromising conditions as a part of their writing labor. Less attention, however, has been paid to the role that race has played in shaping these experiences. Within workplace literacy studies, examinations of writers' experiences have largely coalesced around writing-intensive work—work that remains popularly coded as white and middle-class.<sup>8</sup> As writing becomes an increasingly valuable and high-stakes commodity in the workplace, failing to analyze race as a part of these experiences obscures the role that it plays in the construction of writing and further reifies workplace writing as a white professional practice.

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<sup>8</sup> An exception here is Byrd's study of African American coders participating in a coding boot camp. Current scholars in technical and professional writing have argued race (Williams and Pimental; Gonzales) and class (Sauer; Windsor) play an important role in the production and interpretation of technical writing because such processes often privilege those associated with whiteness and professional classes of work.

Workplace writing studies (for example, see Brandt, *The Rise*; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*; Findlay, “When Writers”; Lauer and Brumberger; Spinuzzi; Wardle) have highlighted how, even as writing is highly-demanded and valued, workers in writing-intensive positions experience restricted rights to the writing they produce. Literacy scholars (Brandt, *The Rise*; Findlay, “When Writers”) have found that writing is becoming increasingly outsourced and workers are paid to write on behalf of owners. As such, workers have little ability to control or gain recognition for their writing work because it is not considered their property. Scholars have shown how workplace conditions like surveillance (Bruce), documentation (Brandt, *The Rise*; Gee et al.), and high-stakes accountability (Findlay, “When Writers”) come at an emotional cost because they limit the extent to which writers can express themselves (Brandt, *The Rise*; Bruce; Findlay, “When Writers”). In these ways, scholars highlight how workplace writers are experiencing working conditions that have historically been associated with lower classes<sup>9</sup> of work—specifically those related to exploitation and alienation. By critiquing the current status and conditions of some workplace writers, this scholarship draws attention to how economic transformations have resulted in systems that value writing over writers. And although writing studies scholarship has highlighted that writing work can be low-wage (Bousquet; Kahn et al.), working-class (Windsor), and practiced by workers of color (Byrd), recent studies have largely centered middle-class positions associated with whiteness by conceptualizing workplace writing as writing-intensive, computer- or digital-based practices including documentation, document production, coding, editing, and social media writing. This dissertation contributes to workplace

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<sup>9</sup> Although class categorizations change over time, I focus here on working-class manual labor that entails physical work, is compensated by low-wages, is associated with a low socio-economic status, and is often classified as low-skill and low-literacy (Hull; Rose). U.S. historical studies of manual labor (Dubofsky and Dulles; Jones; Roedger and Esch) and literacy (Wan) have demonstrated how race-based discrimination and exclusion has limited mobility for workers within these classes of work and affected constructions of literacy (Mortenson).

literacy scholarship by further examining how intersections of race, class, and immigration status shape workplace writing conditions in ways that maintain and amplify stratification in workplaces.

Scholars in writing studies have also used labor as a lens to examine the experiences of academic workers within institutions of higher education. In recent examinations, writing studies scholars have analyzed the writing and working conditions of academic workers like tenure-track (Owens and Ittersum; Takayoshi and Sullivan) and contingent faculty (Bousquet; Kahn et al.; Scott; Scott and Bannon, Schell). This scholarship highlights how traditionally middle-class positions are increasingly devalued and how university composition labor is stratified in terms of gender (Riedner; Schell), race (Kynard), and class (Bousquet; Kahn et al.). Drawing comparisons to corporate-owned factories that exploit their workers in order to increase profits, scholars argue that writing has played a significant role in the transformation of university economies because universities profit from increased composition enrollments at the expense of a largely contingent labor force (Bousquet; Scott). Because of these compromising conditions and little institutional support (Birmingham), faculty activists have joined unions who have historically organized working-class trades (SEIU Faculty Forward)<sup>10</sup>. As a whole, this scholarship has attempted to use current conditions to highlight connections across classes of university labor (Bousquet; Kahn et al.; Schell; Scott). But less attention has been paid to the particular workplace experiences, and specifically the workplace writing experiences, of those at the university's lowest ranks of labor—those in service and maintenance roles which, as I highlighted in the introduction, are disproportionately held by people of color.

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<sup>10</sup> Service Employees International Union (one of the organizers of contingent faculty) helped organize Justice for Janitors, a campaign that organized and unionized janitors (some of whom worked in universities) in the 1990's.

While scholars have drawn attention to how professional writers and academic laborers experience conditions of alienation and exploitation in the current workplace writing economy, questions remain about the role race plays in constructing and distributing writing labor. In this study, I investigate the writing experiences of those whose job it is to clean a literacy institution characterized by white academic labor and how workplace writing becomes racialized as a white professional practice in order to maintain university race and class hierarchies. Rather than consider how university writers are also working-class laborers, I examine how those more popularly considered working class laborers are also university writers. What can these workers' experiences tell writing researchers, teachers, and administrators about how writing functions in a public literacy workplace?

### **Critical Race Approaches to Sponsorship**

By focusing on race, I do not want to re-inscribe racial scripts (Molina), but this dissertation is not solely about the way participants experience racialization as people of color in the institution. This dissertation traces the role writing plays in racializing the university as white and the ways that construction requires participants to negotiate raced literacy hierarchies in order to reach their literacy desires. In addition to data, that underlying argument is informed by a critical race theoretical framework that I found held the most explanatory power for participants' experiences of writing.

Critical race studies scholarship functions as a lens in this dissertation to more broadly investigate how the construction and distribution of workplace writing not only reflect but reproduce historical and current legacies of white supremacy in institutions of higher education (Kynard). In order to analyze the university's interests in terms of maintaining race-based stratification, I draw from critical race theory (CRT), a body of scholarship originating in legal

studies that seeks to expose how racial inequality remain inherent parts of U.S. civilization. This scholarship specifically examines the ways that race-based inequality is reinforced by taken-for-granted laws, policies, and behaviors in everyday life (Delgado and Stefanic). CRT scholars in education have demonstrated how through their physical structures, funding, faculty make-up, curriculum, policies, and programs (Patton), both K-12<sup>11</sup> (Dixson & Rousseau; Ladson-Billings, “Just What”; Ladson-Billings and Tate; Yosso, *Toward*) and post-secondary (Hayes and Ivery; Harris, Patton, Yosso et al.) educational institutions reproduce historical and current legacies of white supremacy (Kynard). In this dissertation, I refer to white supremacy as it is defined by Derald Wing Sue: “a doctrine of racial superiority that justifies discrimination, segregation, and domination of persons of color based on any ideology or belief system that considers all other Non-White groups inferior” (155). Following Sue and CRT scholarship, I consider white supremacy to be a historical structure, rather than an individual action (Diangelo). I focus here on how white supremacy justifies and motivates racism or discrimination based on race in the distribution of university writing such that access to and recognition for writing becomes a privilege associated with whiteness.

In order to describe how one postsecondary institution controls custodian writing as a part of a broader racial project, I bring together critical race and feminist theorist Sara Ahmed’s concept of “institutional whiteness” with Deborah Brandt’s (*Literacy*) analytic “sponsors of literacy.” Brandt defines sponsors as “agents, local, or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach to model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold literacy and gain advantage by it in some way” (19). Although sponsorship is often considered a beneficent or neutral practice that supports literacies, Brandt draws attention to the ways in which literacy

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<sup>11</sup> For studies of whiteness in K-12 contexts, see Lee and Trainor.

sponsorship reproduces and amplifies inequities. Brandt highlights that sponsorship includes the control and restriction of literacies as well as the way institutions remain motivated by a return on their sponsorship. I use sponsorship here to analyze how the institution supports, regulates, and suppresses custodian writing as a means of specifically maintaining institutional whiteness. Institutional whiteness, Ahmed argues, is an institution's interest in maintaining the university as a white space, an investment in whiteness that preserves white interests and advantage (33-43). Institutional whiteness does not depend on white actors but on an investment in maintaining white culture and privilege. I use this concept to analyze how the institution I examine at once positions participants as celebrated diversity and as outside of the public in ways that deny them opportunities to take ownership, express themselves, and learn through writing. Critical race approaches to sponsorship illuminate how institutional whiteness functions through and depends upon constructions and distributions of workplace writing.

I am indebted to scholarship in Latinx/Chicanx studies that has helped me analyze the specific discrimination participants experience. Latino/Latina critical theory (Latcrit) (Bernal, "Critical"; Elenes and Bernal; Solorzono and Yosso; Villenes and Foley; Villalplondo) analyzes how institutional policies, and the messages and practices that accompany them, uphold white advantage in the university. Latcrit is an outgrowth of critical race theory (CRT) that seeks to theorize the particular discrimination Latinx people face as a part of laws, policies, and programs in a country and civilization in which racial inequality remains an inherent part of daily life. My understanding of race, citizenship, and writing have also been informed by recent collections in writing studies including *Decolonizing Rhetoric and Composition Studies: New Latinx Keywords for Theory and Pedagogy* (Ruiz & Sánchez) and *Rhetorics Elsewhere and Otherwise: Contested Modernities, Decolonial Visions* (García & Baca). This scholarship has helped me analyze how

the university creates positions of racialization for participants through the co-production of citizenship and language which then reifies, reproduces, and rationalizes that position through workplace writing. I have also drawn from Chicana feminist scholarship (Anzaldúa; Cruz; Darder) to analyze how participants use non-regulated writing practices to express their lived, embodied experiences and how those experiences are marked by migration and surveillance within a context of institutional regulation. As a whole, this scholarship functions as a frame to consider how participants use literacy to express their lived experiences in educational institutions that regulate brown bodies as a part of reifying English-speaking, white dominance.

Participants' stories trace the continued manifestations of a current and historical legacy of racism and nationalism in institutions of higher education through the specific ways in which workplace languages and literacies are defined, promoted, and restricted. Their stories reflect how the university's interest in reproducing traditional power structures associated with white, North American, English-speaking supremacy is deeply tied to the ways in which workplace writing in the institution is constructed as a practice entitled to those associated with whiteness. As such, participants' experiences in this study serve as counterstories (Solorzono and Yosso; Martinez) that challenge dominant white narratives about what it is like to write in the twenty-first century workplace and, specifically, within a university context.

### **Studying the Experiences of University Custodians**

This study focuses on the central research questions: What kinds of writing do university custodial workers use and practice? What are the conditions for their writing? And what do these practices and conditions tell us about experiences of writing in race- and class-stratified workplaces, including educational institutions? Answering these questions provides insight into how institutions reproduce and workers negotiate race and class hierarchies.

### *Regulated and Non-regulated Writing*

To begin to answer these research questions, I use a twofold definition of writing. First, based on my observations of practices, regulations, and compensation systems within the custodial workplace, I define writing as it is normatively constructed within the university context as alphabetic hand-inscription on surfaces that commonly include paper or screen. Writing includes the activities (Prior and Shipka), practices (Scribner and Cole), and materials (Brandt and Clinton; Vieira, *American*) involved in typing on computers at desks within offices, answering or producing work emails on phones or computers, texting on work phones, producing printed signs, and even displaying text on clothing. As I explain further in later chapters, these practices and materials are institutionally assigned to managers and restricted or controlled for non-managerial workers so I describe them here as *regulated writing*. In order to examine the practices of non-managerial workers functioning in a context where workplace writing is restricted and associated with hierarchical ranking, I also discuss *non-regulated writing* which, in this case, involves the practices and materials participants use to inscribe in both alphabetic and non-alphabetic forms (Boone and Mignolo). Differentiating regulated and non-regulated writing reflects participants' practices while still acknowledging the status of institutional definitions of writing and the limitations participants experience when they write outside of such socio-cultural norms (Brandt, *Literacy*; Barton and Hamilton; Heath; Street).

### *Researcher Positionality*

#### **Researcher Positionality**

I see my position as a white researcher shaping this study in three main interrelated ways:

1. *My position within institutions of education*

I was originally drawn to the study's research questions based on my experience as a K-12 and college teacher working in communities with students and families of color, many of whom identified as bi/multilingual immigrants. As a community college composition instructor, I taught adults who were pursuing postsecondary education while working in full-time manual and service labor positions on the night shift. When I began to attend graduate school and teach in a predominantly white institution with a highly race- and class-stratified labor force, I asked how public literacy institutions created such stratified contexts for writing and how staff in university manual labor and service positions were using and benefiting from the institution's many literacy resources. My position within university spaces put in stark relief how, as a part of institutional whiteness, I was awarded access to writing materials and practices that participants were denied. As a white scholar, I have benefited and continue to benefit from these unjust and unearned advantages.

2. *My understanding of race*

My understanding of race has been informed by critical race theory, particularly in terms of the way institutions and constructions of literacy uphold systemic racism. This is a perspective that I am not sure participants shared because not all participants named themselves as institutionally racialized. My position as a white researcher likely shaped participants' willingness to talk about race.

3. *My position as an English speaker*

As an English speaker, I lack cultural intuition (González Ybarra, 2020) and knowledge that stems from a shared lived linguistic experience, and this position likely caused me to miss nuances in my communication with participants. At times, however, this position

allowed me to participate in the linguistic negotiations that participants used (like using voice-to text technologies) to work across languages in their English-dominant work context. In order to account for some of my limitations, participants could opt for an interpreter I employed. I also engaged in member-checking as a part of interviews, providing transcripts in English or Spanish and inviting participants to make revisions.

I have struggled to describe my relationship with participants. Over the course of the study, I would call them my friends because I was invested in their lives and I shared my life beyond the study with them. This included my pregnancy which lasted the duration of the study and for which they offered interest, compassion, and emotional support. Some participants referred to me as a friend as well. But I am cautious to use this language because I neither want to obscure the power differential embedded in our relationship nor impose my feelings on them. Our relationship was shaped by the way that my position in the university sometimes made me a point of contact for access. Participants called upon me as reference, document reader, and memoir writer. In saying this, I by no means wish to position myself as a savior<sup>12</sup>. Instead, I want to emphasize that these interactions reflect negotiations like those I discuss later in the text where participants use resources available to them in light of barriers imposed by institutional hierarchies and broader economic and social systems of inequity. While I remained in a position of privilege across contexts, I strove to work across some differences by spending time with and learning from participants both within and outside of the workplace. We shared meals, religious services, and family events over and beyond the course of the year-long study.

### *Research Context*

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<sup>12</sup> Scholars in critical race Ladson-Billings, *The Dreamkeepers*) and whiteness studies (Leonardo) have highlighted the proclivity of people who are white to position themselves as saving people of color.

This study takes place at a Midwestern<sup>13</sup>, predominantly white, research university. The city in which the university is located has experienced an increase in immigrants from areas of Asia, Africa, and South America,<sup>14</sup> but remains largely racially segregated in terms of housing, schooling, and community spaces. Immigrants of color face a broader national social and political context that sanctions increasing violence and discrimination against them. Increases in workplace raids (Immigrant Legal Resource Center, National Immigrant Justice Center, National Immigration Law Center; National Immigration Law Center) and intimidation construct workplaces in particular as high-risk spaces for immigrants, particularly those who identify as or are perceived to be Latinx. National immigration officers have intimidated students on college campuses (Gomez) and these raids also affect immigrants of color who work at institutions of higher education. In these ways, participants face a local and national context in which anti-immigrant legislation, discourse, violence (Iwama), and family separation (Levine) have cultivated conditions of terror for immigrant populations.

While the majority of academic laborers at the particular institution I examine work during the day, a manager reported that approximately 80% of custodial positions work on the second and third shift. He reported that, outside of staff employed by housing, the first shift custodial staff responds to problems that arise during the day while the second and third shift perform work that is more routine. To my knowledge, the university does not collect or provide data on racial and ethnic categories by shift, but national data shows that night workers are disproportionately immigrants and people of color (New American Economy). A failure to

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<sup>13</sup> For literacy studies with Spanish-speaking populations in the Midwest, see Cintron; Farr, *Rancheros*; Guerra; Guerra and Farr.

<sup>14</sup> This is reflective of a national migration pattern often referred to as the “New Latino Diaspora” in which Latinx people are settling in areas of the US where they have not traditionally moved (Hamann and Harklau).

collect and make this research publicly available reflects an investment in maintaining stratification that parallels universities nationally.

Although there are white custodial staff and non-white administrators and academic workers at the particular university I examined, there is a disproportionate number of minoritized people in the custodial staff. As I discuss later in the text, the institution largely refers to this race-based hierarchy through its discussion of diversity. At the time of the study, within the custodial department hierarchy, there existed racial, linguistic, gender, and ethnic stratification reflected by the disproportionate number of white men in supervisor positions. At new staff training, workers were given an organizational chart with pictures of the staff hierarchy. Outside of one white woman, all managerial and supervisor staff presented as white men. The broader university workforce, including those like myself in research and teaching positions, were also predominantly white. Focusing on the writing practices of custodial workers within this academic institution allows me to examine workplace writing in a highly race- and class-stratified workplace.

### *Sampling and Participants*

During a pilot study<sup>15</sup> in the fall of 2016, I interviewed two custodial managers who were white, male, United States-born, English-speakers. I contacted them by email to get permission to shadow non-managerial custodial staff. In the summer of 2017, I began a full study by sending recruitment emails to all second and third shift managers. Two managers opted into the study and one granted me permission to observe staff meetings, attend new staff trainings, and interview and shadow his custodial crew. I introduced the study to his sixteen-person crew at a team

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<sup>15</sup> For more on pilot studies, see Yin 92–4.

meeting where I distributed recruitment materials outlining the purpose of the study and offering a \$20 Target gift card for participation. I recruited individuals who spoke English and/or Spanish because the majority of workers on the crew spoke one or both languages. All six focal participants are male<sup>16</sup>, native Spanish-speakers, and first-generation immigrants. This study focuses on six participants to provide multi-method and multi-sited data collection for those involved in the study. Doing so helps answer the research questions by focusing on in-depth analysis of participants' lived experiences in and beyond the context of their workplace. This study draws from the specificity of individual stories to align with the study's theoretical framework that centers personal experience, and in particular, counterstorytelling, as knowledge.

### *Data Collection*

#### **Observations**

In order to observe participants' practices, I conducted approximately seventy-five hours of participant-observations (Heath). I shadowed work shifts for two-hour sessions and conducted observations twice weekly before and during team meetings from approximately 4:30-5:15 pm. I observed a six-hour new employee training which provided information on workplace policies I later used to compare with observations. During observations, I recorded participant responses using my phone audio recorder, wrote field notes regarding their literacy and work practices, and took photographs of documents and settings to record the materials and context that mediated practices.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> I did not plan to work exclusively with Latinx men. The white male members of the custodial crew did not opt into the study and there were no white women on the focal crew. Of the approximately 1/3 of the crew that was female, two women opted in and then opted out of the study. For some of the barriers facing immigrant women who might participate in literacy research see Lorimer Leonard.

<sup>17</sup> During observations, I took field notes and took photographs (Barton and Hamilton). Photographs functioned as visual field notes to capture writing materials and writing in the environment so that I could return to them after leaving the site. I used the same coding system for photographs and field notes.

## **Interviews**

To contextualize my observations using participants' perceptions, I engaged in twelve-and-a-half hours of focused interviews (Merton et al.) that lasted an hour to an hour-and-a-half. These interviews investigated participants' literacy experiences and practices within and outside of the workplace and provided brief literacy histories (Brandt, *Literacy*) to help me understand current literacy practices in light of their lifelong literacies. Interviews were individual, semi-structured, and audio recorded. Because I do not speak Spanish, I gave all participants the option of using an interpreter who facilitated two of the interviews. I revised my protocol and interviewed two participants during their work shift observation because they expressed they could not arrange a separate interview. As a part of all interviews, I used member-checking by offering participants a copy of their transcript in English or Spanish. Overall, these interviews allowed me to compare participants' perceptions with practices observed.

In order to collect data about writing practices across the custodial staff hierarchy, I engaged in individual, semi-structured, and one-hour, focused interviews with two managers and one lead worker. And to compare managerial and non-managerial uses and perceptions of writing, the interview questions investigated their experiences writing at the university and their perceptions of institutional writing regulations. I also held half-hour unstructured follow-up interviews with the crew manager and lead worker to gather data on workplace literacy policies which helped me compare institutional writing policies with practices observed.

## **Participant Photographs and Video**

In order to further situate writing practices within the context of participants' daily lives, I asked participants to record their literacy practices by taking photographs and/or short videos (Cardinal; Konigstein and Azadegan; Nordquist;) at home, work, and on the way to and from

work. Three of the focal participants and the lead workers opted-in to this aspect of the study. I provided them with an iPhone for taking pictures and videos and asked them to record up to ten practices involving, reading, writing, listening, and speaking. In total, participants submitted ten video clips ranging from one to five minutes and twenty photographs which helped me understand how they perceived and used writing in the context of participants' broader lives.

### *Data Analysis*

I used open coding (Charmaz) to work across interviews, observations, photographs and videos<sup>18</sup> to code for kinds of writing, with writing defined as hand-inscribed or displayed alphabetic text on a surface, as well as experiences of writing. When I noticed that participants rarely engaged in these forms of writing, I expanded what counted as writing and looked for other literacies as well. I also noticed numerous instances of writing regulation, when custodian writing was restricted through institutional policies, practices, or messaging. Within these two code families, writing regulation and writing practices, I conducted closed coding that specifically examined the kinds of writing regulation and the corresponding practices that took place. I structured the chapters around codes that described the strategies participants used to negotiate literacy within their regulated context 1) negotiating white property 2) practicing non-regulated writing 3) employing and constructing portable literacies. Because each chapter involves specific codes and analysis, I address data analysis specifically in the individual chapters.

### **Chapter Summaries**

This dissertation was written as a 3-article project. Each chapter focuses on particular conditions participants negotiate in order to use literacy in the ways they desire. Chapter 2:

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<sup>18</sup> I coded photographs the same way I coded field notes. I coded videos similarly, but I segmented them and analyzed them in coordination with their translated video transcripts (Heath et al.).

“Custodian Writing and White Property in the University” argues that participants negotiate constructions of writing as white property in order to gain ownership in the university. By doing so, this chapter intervenes in current discussions about workplace writing to show that, as writing is increasingly contested property in the information economy, it is also increasingly constructed as white. Chapter 3: “Non-regulated Writing” theorizes non-regulated writing to trace the way participants challenge institutional definitions of writing to express themselves in an institutionally regulated context. As a whole, the chapter intervenes in current workplace writing scholarship by calling for an expanded definition of and purpose for workplace writing that includes writing for self-expression. And Chapter 4: “Portable Literacies” draws from transnational literacy studies (Vossoughi and Gutiérrez; Lorimer Leonard; Nordquist; Vieira) to argue participants learn via portable literacies. This chapter makes a conceptual contribution to transnational literacy studies through the term portable literacies. The term provides a way to describe the self-sponsored, informal learning that is rarely recognized within educational institutions but that participants use to pursue their own learning agenda amidst conditions of movement in their lives. Chapter 5: “The Right to Write as an Expressive Workplace Practice” outlines pedagogical and policy implications for writing teachers and higher education administrators to inform a more racially just conception of workplace writing in and beyond institutions of higher education.

While participants’ overall literacy practices are not limited to those that they practice in their work context, chapters 2 and 3 focus on workplace practices to demonstrate how educational institutions sponsor the literacies of people who work there. Chapter 4 examines participants’ literacy practices more broadly across a variety of contexts like cars, homes, and religious community sites in order to account for practices that may only be possible (Moll et al.;

Bernal, “Learning”) outside of the institutional context. And while I highlight the variety of literacy and learning practices that participants use across contexts, I do not wish to suggest that they should be engaging in these practices or that these practices are more valuable than others in their lives. That emphasis would re-inscribe harmful connections between literacy and morality (Brandt, *Literacy*; Stuckey). Instead, I wish to highlight that participants demonstrate a consistent desire and right to practice literacy for their own purposes both within and beyond the context of their work.

### **Implications**

This study urges public university administrators and employees to live up to the university’s public mission by interrogating the ways in which cultures of white supremacy construct writers and shape access to writing practices and materials in institutions of higher education. But perhaps even more significantly, this study highlights how university workers negotiate restrictive conditions and definitions of writing to express themselves and their lived experiences in ways that neither increase employer profits nor rely on institutional support. In this way, participants’ experiences and practices call for an expanded definition of and purpose for workplace writing—one based not only in the potential for economic and social mobility but in the potential for personal growth and expression. Looking beyond examinations of writing-intensive work and workers in the information economy is necessary for literacy teachers, administrators, and researchers to engage in a more racially just approach to workplace writing.

## Chapter 2

### Custodian Writing and White Property in the University

In the current information economy, literacy studies (Brandt, *The Rise*; Findlay, “When Writers”) have highlighted how workplace writers increasingly lack ownership and control of their writing. These conditions create a fraught relationship between writing and property and contribute to feelings of alienation for writing labor. But in a public literacy institution with a stated mission of public service, how do workers experience writing, particularly those who are less often constructed as writing laborers? In this chapter, I use participant interviews and observations to argue that participants’ experiences bring to light an institutional context in which writing remains the implicit and exclusive entitlement of those associated with whiteness. Within such a framework, Latinx custodial workers are often scrutinized for using university writing materials, undermined by writing characterized as white, and punished for making demands through writing. But even as writing is highly regulated and constructed as off-limits to these workers, participants find ways to practice and assert their agency by writing; they negotiate surveillance, reprimands, and expectations of service in order to materially mark the institution with a message of their own. By doing so, they challenge both the notion that they are non-writing workers and that writing in the university is a white property right (Bell, *Property*; Harris).

This chapter updates literacy arguments about who has historically had the right to literacy by accounting for a context in which writing is increasingly prevalent, profitable, and tied to white identities in the workplace. Such an examination allows us to interrogate the ways universities reify race- and class-based stratification through the inequitable distribution of writing in ways that undermine their public missions. It also contributes to conversations about

university labor and workplace writing because it examines the writing practices of those who are employed within a writing-intensive institution yet are often presumed not to write. In this chapter and the broader dissertation, I make the case that participants are indeed workplace writers because they write in, on, and for the institution as well as for themselves. By making this argument, I do not mean to suggest that the status of workplace writer automatically awards participants power. Recent studies (Brandt, *The Rise*; Findlay, “When Writers”) have shown that workplace writers often do not own or control their writing. But this study highlights that what is at stake in the status of writer is the ability to use writing for personal and professional gain and to challenge writing as a white property right.

### **Literacy’s Role in Upholding White Property**

Literacy historians have long argued that dominant castes construct literacy such that they are able to maintain their social and economic advantage. In his demographic study of nineteenth-century Canadian literacy, Harvey Graff demonstrated that literacy alone did not guarantee social and economic mobility nor did it outweigh the effects of race and class. John Trimbur and Jenny Cook-Gumperz have also argued that dominant castes strategically construct literacy as a panacea to reify false meritocracies and maintain a certain level of inequality. As such, when those in nondominant positions attempt to access literacy, “literacy crises” erupt to raise literacy expectations and standards. Catherine Prendergast extended these arguments by drawing upon critical race theory (Bell, “Who’s Afraid”; Crenshaw et al., *Critical Race*; Delgado and Stefancic; Ladson-Billings, “Just What”) and U.S. history to claim literacy has specifically been constructed as a white property right (7). This construction, she argues, ultimately discourages an equitable redistribution of literacy because it challenges the idea that literacy is valuable because it belongs to whites. And more recently, critical race theorist, Anjali Vats has

shown how writing and creativity continue to be racialized as white entitlements through the distribution of intellectual property rights. At this particular historical moment, there is reason to examine how writing in particular is constructed as a white property right—especially within institutions of education. In an economic climate where written knowledge often equates to profit, writing has become a means of exchange that is increasingly valuable for those who own and control it as property (Brandt, *The Rise* 16–21; Gee et al.; Farrell, “Texting the Future”). This scholarship raises questions about how writing functions not only as property but also as white, and how it does so within U.S. universities.

To further analyze how participants experience university writing as white property, I am aided by feminist and critical race theorist Sara Ahmed’s concept “institutional whiteness.” This concept helps describe how the university I examine implicitly constructs itself as white in ways that enable university property—particularly writing—to also be constructed as white (33). I use the term *university writing* to describe writing that is practiced within the university context and not only carries the status of the institution but reflects university writing privileges. These are white privileges in that they function as a benefit of whiteness, but they take a specific and important form because they position writing, an increasingly valuable commodity (Brandt, *The Rise*), as rightfully owned and controlled by whites. Constructing writing as white property is a mechanism by which white supremacy is maintained within the institution. Within a context of institutional whiteness, white property is upheld in part because such constructions do not depend on individual white bodies (Ahmed 42) and persist even when white bodies are not physically present. In other words, those who regulate writing do not necessarily need to be white. In the institution I examine, white faces are displayed on locker photographs, class

pictures, and research posters. As such, whiteness becomes a pattern that contributes to expectations about which bodies write in the university.

In order to inform my discussion of the specific discrimination around which participants write, I have been helped by Latino/Latina critical theory, which, as an outgrowth of critical race theory, considers intersectionality to account for issues that specifically affect the lives of people who identify as Latinx (Bernal, “Critical”; Elenes and Bernal; Villenas and Foley). This scholarship seeks to challenge the way that issues like immigration, language, citizenship, and ethnicity function as a part of discrimination so that we can envision policies and theories based on empowerment and justice. While I center race and racism in this study, I also discuss the ways particular forms of discrimination function in relation to participants’ intersectional identities (Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing”)—such as their positions in relation to education, class, and English-proficiency—because these aspects of their identities ultimately shape the way they experience writing in the institution.

### **Custodians Writing**

In this section, I describe the conditions under which and the purposes for which participants write to illustrate how they experience writing within the university. I categorize these experiences as writing under surveillance, being written over, writing back, and writing to serve; serving to write. The first two subsections show how participants’ writing threatens white property and how participants must negotiate the assumption that writing is white property in order to write. The sections *Writing under Surveillance* and *Written Over* describe how custodians’ writing is respectively monitored and undermined as a means to control and maintain university property constructed as white. The latter two sections demonstrate how participants specifically challenge writing as a white property right. *Writing Back* and *Writing to Serve*;

*Serving to Write* describe how participants make demands of the institution and its actors by writing on and about university property. Taken together, participants' experiences demonstrate how white property can be institutionally maintained through the regulation of writing and how participants use writing to learn and assert their presence in the university.

### *Writing under Surveillance*

Scholars in writing studies (Gee et al.; Lorimer Leonard 96) and technical communication (Barry) have argued that workplaces increasingly regulate workers by surveying their writing. As such, workers must write under the constant possibility of scrutiny.<sup>19</sup> Participants in this study also experience surveillance around scenes of writing. However, the systems of surveillance they face involve a regulation of space and materials that are constructed as university property and coded as white. My analysis details how workplace surveillance is communicated through institutional messaging and monitoring that ultimately shape participants' experiences of writing in their work context.

When I first met Roberto, he had only been working at the university for six months. He describing himself as someone who “liked to talk” and was the first participant who opted into the study. Since coming to the United States from Mexico when he was seven, Roberto explained that he worked low-wage jobs in restaurants and laundry factories. He claimed custodial work was less physically taxing than his previous jobs, but the day I observed him working he winced through pain and a swollen cheek. The dentist had told him to stay home after a root canal, but he had not yet earned enough time off to do so. As he worked, Roberto

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<sup>19</sup> In his discussion of surveillance exemplified by the panopticon, Michel Foucault describes how, when individuals are aware of their constant visibility, they discipline themselves in ways that are not dependent on a surveyor. Since prison surveillance models have been reproduced in schools and factories, in this case we might consider the university both a school and a kind of factory for writing that deploys models of surveillance.

thoughtfully handed me plastic gloves and safety goggles and punctuated his tasks with “so this is what I do.”<sup>20</sup> For two hours, he led me down hallways, pushing a cart, dumping trash into one bin and recycling in another, then breaking down boxes and carrying them to the dumpster. He knocked on one classroom and laboratory door after another and requested permission to enter spaces filled with writing. He worked around container labels, screens, and experiment lists, making sure this writing was not disrupted and discarding the appropriate writing in his cart. As he did so, Roberto made space for new texts as a part of the institutional production of writing. But his role as someone who removed discarded writing also obscured his role in its production and ultimately positioned him as a worker who did not write.

While cleaning these rooms, Roberto avoided computers because custodial workers were instructed not to touch or even dust technology. He, like four other participants, preferred to use his own phone and computer. Roberto explained: “There are some computers in the hallways. I see a couple other people using them; I don’t know if we are allowed.” Although Roberto had seen other custodians use the computers, he was still not sure *he* was allowed. The workers he was referring to were two white, male, long-time employees. Because of their specific positionality, including their whiteness, I interpreted Roberto as believing that these workers did not count in the “we” he described because they were entitled to different property privileges.

Roberto’s perceptions about university technology were underlined by my observation of a new staff training. At the training, I listened to technology policies read aloud by a white, male, English-speaking facilitator: “Public computer kiosks can be used during work breaks. Every crew should have some available.” Here the facilitator paused, looked up, and explained further. He said he wanted to be very clear that, despite the available kiosks, the use of office computers

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<sup>20</sup> All quotes are direct quotes from participants.

was strictly prohibited. “It’s happened a few times where a professor will log in remotely and there’s a custodian, on the webcam, using the computer.” This narrative helps cultivate an atmosphere of danger circulating around custodial writing, and specifically, the use of university property to create it. While participants remain unseen or overlooked in the majority of their work, the act of writing disrupts this status—making them extra visible and vulnerable to negative consequences. Institutional policies forbid custodial workers from writing in seemingly “private” spaces like offices. At the same time, they are also discouraged from writing in “public” spaces like the computer kiosks because they are in full view of passing managers, faculty, and students who may question them. These instances demonstrate how, when writing is constructed as white property, by extension, so are the materials and spaces that are written on and about. For immigrants like Roberto, who may not yet be citizens and live under the threat of government surveillance due to their status, the threat of workplace surveillance is heightened because both their livelihoods and their residences are at stake.

Despite these conditions, however, I observed Roberto writing during his fifteen-minute shift break. At 7 pm, Roberto sat down at a nearby table and offered to share his beans and chicken for “a lunch.” Then he pulled out a pencil and a Spanish General Education Development (GED) textbook to study. He had borrowed these materials from a teacher who instructed his free community GED course. As he began to study exam questions, Roberto also explained that he had to practice typing because the timed exam was computer operated. Despite the ample computers available in the main lounge, he emphasized needing to bring a computer to practice. Roberto taught himself to type on a laptop he borrowed from his brother. “I have this laptop I can use . . . If I am at work and have a laptop I can do it.” He gently lifted the corner of the laptop to show me the screen and explained how his brother let him bring it to work a few

days a week so he could practice. In the future, he hoped he could use both the GED and his ability to type on the computer to get a higher-paying job.

Utilizing this limited time and his borrowed materials, Roberto managed to write without university property and outside the purview of university surveillance. But by not writing on university computers, Roberto was only able to prepare for the GED when he could bring his brother's laptop to work. He thus limited his study time in ways that had material consequences for him and his family in order to avoid scrutiny from those who felt entitled to withhold university property. In Roberto's case, surveillance happens not only through the scrutiny of written texts but through the regulation of practices and materials that make writing possible. These instances demonstrate how, within a context where custodial worker writing is surveilled and restricted, participants must negotiate university property figured as white in order to learn, practice, and ultimately leverage their writing for material gain.

### *Over Written*

When writing functions as a reflection of property rights, the stakes for maintaining authorship and control are amplified. This section describes how, even when writing is a part of a custodian's designated responsibility, those in positions of greater social and economic power are motivated to write over custodial texts. As such, writing is used to undermine those texts and ultimately reclaim them as white property.

André, the lead worker on the custodial crew, used to attend the university as a student. He is a native English speaker who was born in the mainland United States. His mother is Puerto Rican, his father is African American, and he identifies as Puerto Rican. On the job, he enjoys using the Spanish he learned in school and from his grandmother. He describes himself as an avid journaler and someone who often gets lost in his thoughts. Now in what would be his junior

year at the university, he took a leave from school because, he said, he struggled to find purpose and passion in the engineering program. During one group project, he explained, he was supposed to solve a problem using engineering principles. But when his group designed a “mini-sink” for dorm rooms, he described feeling like their project was inadequate compared to other groups (the most interesting of which was a goat prosthetic). He tried to find another major but finally decided he needed to take time off to “figure out what I want to do.” He applied for a custodial lead worker position to finish out his housing lease because he had begun working in the custodial department as a student.

In the role of lead worker, André had more designated writing responsibilities than other custodial workers. The university provided him with a work phone and gave him access to the manager’s computer. He sent work-related emails, wrote supply orders, and printed signs with custodial notifications. But when I asked if any of his writing had ever been disrupted, André explained that once, while cleaning the bathroom, he noticed one of his signs (one to prevent people from clogging the toilet) had been written on. “There was one sign where someone wrote a joke.” He shrugged and looked away. “It’s kind of gross” he said, increasing the speed of his words as he described the incident. “It was something stupid. The sign [originally] said, ‘Don’t flush the brown paper towels.’ The person wrote ‘but it’s brown after I wipe.’” He shrugged again. Of course, the type of writing André described is not uncommon in university bathrooms: students scrawl personal notes, confessions, and jokes on stalls. I had not, however, observed any writing on bathroom stalls in the particular building where André worked. What André and perhaps the writer characterized as a “stupid joke” also reflected a certain level of entitlement—a feeling that the writer could write on and over the writing of another person, in this case, a member of the custodial staff. As such, it was not the anonymous writing that became the joke

but the idea that custodians could make requests and even demands of those around them via writing. These relations have emotional consequences for workers, even those who have experienced mobility, because they serve as reminders that their writing and their work can be undermined.

A few weeks later, I told André that another custodian had described experiencing race-based discrimination on the job. He immediately began to recount a recent incident he considered to directly demonstrate racism within the institution. A week prior, he had been working in a building different than usual because he was covering another worker's shift. He was posting carpet cleaning notices on the walls and doors so as not to disturb those who worked in the building. Over the course of that week, he explained, three different people approached him and said, "Oh, can I help you find somebody?" At first, he was surprised and a bit uneasy because their questioning made him feel like an outsider. He explained, ". . . in my mind I know what that means like, 'What are you doing? Why are you here?'" He tried to brush off the questions by considering their perspective: "I guess to some degree that's understandable. They probably think I'm a student and what's this young person doing here?" But his perspective changed when he saw a flyer hanging on the wall. The flyer described a recent wallet theft in the building. It advised readers that "if you see any suspicious individuals you can say, 'Can I help you?' or 'Is there something I can help you with?'" He said, "It's like verbatim what the people had been saying to me." As he put the pieces together—the flyer and his interactions with those in the building—he said he felt upset:

I don't know. I have a feeling . . . like this woman got up out of her office and came into the hallway. I saw that [flyer] after all that had happened and it just sort of made my stomach sink. I feel like it made that environment to be suspicious of people. The flyer, and the way it was taken up, served as a reminder that André did not belong in the university space—that he not only had no right to its property but that he threatened it. As André

described, this writing created an “environment” of “suspicion” in which staff, like the woman who took the trouble to get up and come out into the hallway, were empowered to assert their right to protect their property. Although his sign had not been written on, this flyer functioned to metaphorically overwrite it because it functioned as a means to protect property constructed as white. In this moment, André was again unable to gain authority through writing because his position as a writer was questioned.

André held the unique and conflicting position of a former student and current custodian—someone who moved from intellectual, writing-intensive work to that of a manual laborer. While André may have been treated similarly as a student of color, he distinguished those identities. He explained that, at first, he had thought that he was being judged because he looked young, like a student. But to him, standing out for being a young student did not challenge his membership to the university or racialize him in the same way. In his role as a custodial worker, particularly a lead worker, he considered himself to be professional but when those around him doubted this status, he began to recognize how other university workers characterized him—not only as an outsider but as a potential threat to their property. Despite being promoted to a role with more writing responsibilities and despite being educated within the very institution he cleaned, he was read as an outsider—one who was not entitled to write or whose writing did not afford him power.

These identities—outsider, nonwriter, and threat—continually overlapped in participants’ experiences. André’s experiences exemplify how custodians engage in workplace writing to support other intellectual work: the signs that prevent toilets from overflowing and that notify other employees about scheduled cleanings so they can continue to produce writing. But these experiences also demonstrate how writing does not automatically award participants authority. In

these cases, hanging and creating texts did not undermine expectations of whiteness. Instead, they provoked a reclaiming of writing as a white property right and as a mechanism to protect property from those read as outsiders.

### *Writing Back*

Within the current economic context, writing is increasingly demanded of workers (Brandt, *The Rise*). But participants in this study more frequently described experiencing writing in the form of demands than having writing demanded of them. Faculty, staff, and students used writing to instruct custodians how to do their jobs and even to deploy reprimands. These instances reinforced dominant hierarchies and positioned custodian writing, specifically custodian written demands, as a punishable offense. But participants also demonstrated how writing can function as a way to assert agency within these restrictive conditions. Writing allowed them to materially speak back—to respond to and make demands of—an institution that so frequently makes demands of them.

Several participants described how staff and students who work during the day wrote them notes about their property. This form of written communication became particularly salient in my discussion with Henry. Henry is a man who describes himself as thoroughly “disciplined.” After serving seven years in the Cuban military, where he learned to keep his bed and uniform “just right,” I observed discipline in the straight lines he traced with the floor cleaner and the way he carefully peeled each finger of his plastic gloves before turning them inside out and placing them in the garbage. Unlike most participants, Henry considered himself to be middle class because he was college educated and owned a home in Cuba. Throughout our conversations, he often expressed despair that he could not practice his “profession” (as an electrician) in the United States because he said he “could not learn English.” Since he considers himself to be

educated and to have professional skills, he said he felt frustrated when he saw those around the institution showing “no respect” for his work. Compared to other participants who identified as working class, Henry’s particular positionality as a middle-class educated person may have led him to express more frustration with his low-status custodial role and, in particular, to argue for his right to write.

As I observed Henry during his shift, we came to a women’s bathroom and he began to tell a story. He described how, in this bathroom, he’d found a note written in lipstick on the mirror. He described the words that he had to clean away: “Why is there no toilet paper and paper towels?” Henry said he was particularly disturbed by this message, not only because it was written in lipstick, but because he replaced the toilet paper every day. He directed me over to the toilet paper dispenser to demonstrate how he threw away half-empty rolls just to ensure there would always be enough. It was a waste, he said, but he did not want to face any more complaints.

Henry connected the low status of his position with racism explicitly, saying that students and staff looked down on those who have “to clean floors” because they are “Latino.” He said, “...there are some people that underestimate you when you are explaining something because you are Latino, because you don’t speak English properly, and they look at you as ignorant and stuff like that.” He described several instances involving writing that he believed illustrated his point: “There are some people, technicians, that do wrong things, and you write, ‘please, don’t do this,’ and then they...as if they want to scare you, they tell you, ‘don’t touch it because it has bacteria.’” Henry explained one particular scenario. He had observed technicians working on a machine and decided to write to them to explain that they were not fixing the machines correctly. He knew how to work the machine because of his professional experience and decided to write

them a note that they could read during the day because he felt more comfortable writing than speaking in English, and he understood English grammar from writing in Spanish. He described the way he carefully looked up words using his phone and Google Translate, asking himself, “Am I using words that are disrespectful?” But, after he wrote the note, the technicians ignored his requests. Even worse, he said, his manager told him they had “filled out a complaint” saying *he* had violated university policy by touching bacterially infected materials. He saw this complaint as a retaliation for the note he had written. In such interactions, he said, he was a “ping-pong ball” stuck in the middle between forces he could not control.

Although Henry expressed frustration, this frustration also motivated him to write. In addition to writing notes to other employees, he used writing to mark university materials despite their construction as not belonging to him. While observing his shift, Henry walked me over to a trash can in the hallway, saying “I have a question . . .” Written in black marker on the lid and side of the container, I read “Trash only.” Henry asked if both were okay: “Trash only . . . only trash?” I replied that, yes, both made sense to me and asked if he had written the words. He said again that it was to remind people that the container was only for trash. In this moment, Henry wrote on university property that was constructed as not belonging to him. Despite discouragement, he used writing to make his message visible to university audiences—to both keep the university space clean so that writing and other university work could take place and to save himself the work of sorting others’ refuse. Writing provided an importantly material way to respond and to assert a right to write on university property. In this way, writing allowed workers who are often made invisible, by work schedules and treatment, to become visible and make demands of the institution and its actors.

Henry's experiences demonstrate how custodial writing becomes a threat when it infringes upon the perceived right to control university property. The discrimination he perceived did not depend on the enactment of exclusively white individuals. Rather, it was based upon a pattern that encourages those who belong to an institution to associate writing with whiteness and to question writing that does not meet such expectations. But Henry also illustrated that writing could be used to challenge white property—to assert one's right to send a message and to do so on the institution's property. He used writing to write back to an institution and its actors—those who write to him but often undermine his written requests. By doing so, he both made his job a little bit easier and asserted his presence in the university space. His experience shows how writing has the potential to mark an institution and make demands of its actors in ways that, for some, may be worth the risk.

*Writing to Serve; Serving to Write*

Although participants often explained how they were discouraged from writing, they also described how, in specific cases, they felt permitted and encouraged to write. These episodes exemplify what critical race scholars refer to as interest convergence: the proclivity for white people to support civil rights only when it benefits them (Bell, "Brown"). I draw from this critical race principle to analyze the ways in which custodial workers write to serve white interests while, at the same time, they negotiate those interests to write. In these cases, they write to return property and gain writing privileges in the process.

During a work observation one evening, Henry pointed to an academic office and explained that it belonged to a manager who was very kind to him. "She is very grateful," he said, explaining how he wrote the manager notes to return lost property: valuable items like rings, watches, and wallets left on tables or bathroom sinks. In the notes, Henry wrote what he

found and where he found it and left the message for the manager to read when they began work in the morning. Imitating the gratitude people expressed when they were reunited with their property, he said, “‘I can’t believe it, thank you,’ they say.” Another participant, Tomás, described similar interactions. Tomás had worked at the university for seventeen years after immigrating from Mexico. He had worked in various departments as a custodian and said he found the work to be peaceful. Each day he took his grandchildren to and from school before beginning his shift. During his shift, he said, he too wrote notes to return money or other property. Tomás even showed me the pocket in his cart where he stored a few pens and sticky notes, which he used to leave a short note with the object explaining the situation for the department manager. He once found and returned \$200. Similar to Henry, Tomás emphasized that these property owners were “very, very thankful.” In these instances, participants were allowed to write when they appeared to restore property to those who, within a context of institutional whiteness, were constructed as white. But they also reveal how Henry and Tomás positioned themselves as valuable through the property value they restored. By writing to restore property and, to some extent, meet expectations about their relationship to property, they positioned themselves as those who had the right to write within the university context.

Another participant, Jesus also shared how he used writing to assert his value in the workplace. As I followed Jesus up the elevator to his floor, he waved enthusiastically to a student and stopped to talk and laugh with a faculty member. I recognized this collegiality as a part of his personality; I observed him making even the sternest worker laugh when he jokingly threw punches until he got a smile. And when I shared that I was having a baby, he asked me how I was feeling and teased me that I might be having twins. Jesus’s proficiency with English allowed him to communicate with other faculty and students in ways some of the other workers were not

able. He may also have felt more comfortable than some workers because of his more-than-twenty years of experience working at the university. But I learned these collegial behaviors were not unconscious acts. After talking to a faculty member, he leaned over and whispered to me, explaining he made a point of saying hi to every person he saw. He used his sense of humor because “life is hard” and because he realized that being friendly helped him do his job.

The institution recognized Jesus’s efforts by materially marking his value in writing. In his supply closet, he had hung a campus-wide award with an accompanying article, and he let out a broad smile as he showed me the framed certificate. I also noticed a framed handwritten note. As we walked through the hallway and passed a trash container, he explained the note through a story. He had had a conflict with a particular student who routinely threw away bloody lab materials in the trash. By doing so, she prevented Jesus from removing the trash because he could not touch blood and remain in compliance with university policy. He complained to his manager, but when word got back to the student, she became angry and retaliated by giving Jesus “dirty looks” every time they passed in the hall. But the student’s behavior did not discourage him, he said. He perceived her anger as a challenge. When the student gave him “dirty looks,” he smiled back and said hello. In the end, he explained, he did win her over. In fact—he saved this for the end—she wrote him a thank you letter, the one that is framed and hanging in his supply closet. By hanging these written artifacts on the wall, Jesus was both able to assert his value within the institution and communicate it to the institution. As such, writing allowed him to materially make a place for himself within the university space.

Jesus also took ownership of the university space by making demands of the institution and its actors through writing. “I want to show you something...” he said, pulling out a manila folder and flipping through sheets of paper. These papers were signs covered with clip art paper

towel rolls, plastic water bottles, and phrases like “Please no liquids in the trash.” When I asked if the manager made the signs, he said, “No, I made them. I decided to do it.” He emphasized to me that he not only created the signs, but it was his idea to write them in the first place. After asking the manager’s permission, he designed the signs and printed them at home or asked a student to help him with the university printer. He led me from one sign to the next saying, “Want to see another?” He showed me signs above trash cans and on bathroom stall doors with phrases like “Remember to put all trash in the bins.” He explained how the signs had been left undisturbed and how he thought the signs had made “a difference” in the way people behaved. The signs made his job easier and safer and allowed Jesus to tell institutional actors how to use university property.

Jesus expressed a sense of agency in being able to send his message in writing and to do so materially and visibly in the university space. To some extent, it may be Jesus’s hospitable behavior<sup>21</sup>—that which those around him interpret as serving white interests—that afforded him the right to write in this case. But, while Jesus’s behavior aligned with expectations whiteness had constructed for him, his acts were also self-conscious. Jesus explained knowing that he was giving the institution what it wanted. And he leveraged this understanding to gain a sense of ownership and send a message through writing. Jesus’s experience highlights a problem of inequitable power relations, but it also demonstrates another way custodial staff adeptly negotiate their restricted conditions to assert their agency through writing.

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<sup>21</sup> While respectability politics (Higginbothom) address pressures to behave in ways understood to be acceptable to dominant groups more generally, I focus here on the behaviors understood to serve white property interests specifically.

These experiences reflect how the difference between custodial writing that is institutionally resisted and accepted is the extent to which participants seem to be writing to serve students and staff—positions more closely associated with whiteness. And in the particular context of manual and service work, pressures to behave in ways that serve white property interests are heightened because, by definition, their livelihood depends upon serving others in the university. In such cases, writing is not envisioned as a threat but as a mechanism to further support white interests and, in particular, property. But these instances also demonstrate how participants have found ways to write within a regulatory institutional context because writing holds a valuable place in their working lives and because it allows them to display their value to the institution.

### **The Right to Write**

In this chapter, I have argued that participants are constructed not only as non-writing workers but as those who have no right to write in an institutional context that constructs writers as white. Such constructions obscure the writing these workers do—the practices and materials that are both valuable parts of their working lives and valuable to the institution's production of writing. Participants' experiences complicate the way scholars have envisioned writing to function in writing-intensive institutions and economies like universities (Brandt, *The Rise*; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*; Gee et al., Lorimer Leonard). Recent literacy studies have highlighted the way workplace writers become invisible behind their texts because they are unable to claim or control their writing as property (Brandt, *The Rise*). In many cases, participants in this study also remain invisible because of a complex web of conditions including language, immigration status, and physical and temporal segregation from daytime workers—conditions by which they are denied associations with the organization for which they work. But,

in these cases, writing disrupts rather than creates their invisible status by making participants both more vulnerable and better able to assert their agency within the university space. As such, some workers risk their livelihood to claim their right to write.

In several participants' experiences, they are prevented from writing because university members question their status as writers. As composition and rhetoric faculty and staff, we can play a role in exposing such structures of whiteness and shifting expectations about who writes and has the right to do so within university spaces. We can look to programs like Mobility Movilidad, a project by Proyecto Carrito, a collective of staff and students at Emerson College that acknowledges workers as writers and provides mechanisms for them to share their stories outside of institutional and professional academic regulations. We can encourage other students, staff, and faculty to acknowledge custodians as writers and to challenge the inequitable power structures that prevent them from writing. Participants' experiences demonstrate that university policies do not always ensure access but everyday interactions can reinforce and challenge narratives about who university workers are and what they are capable of doing. Participants' stories speak to their existence as workplace writers and the threat they can pose to institutional whiteness when they attempt to enact it.

### Chapter 3

#### Non-regulated Writing

This chapter continues to ask: What kinds of writing do university custodial workers use and practice? What are the conditions for their writing? And what do these practices and conditions tell us about writing in race- and class-stratified workplaces, including educational institutions? Using critical race (Ahmed; Bell, *Who's Afraid*; Bernal, *Critical*; Patton; Yosso et al.) approaches to literacy sponsorship (Brandt, *Literacy*) and data including observations and interviews with university custodians, this chapter discusses two main findings: 1) participants experience labor conditions that restrict their writing as a part of race and class hierarchies and 2) participants employ writing practices that run under the radar of institutional restrictions in order to learn, communicate, and express themselves within the context of their work.

Based upon the study's findings, this chapter conceptualizes an overlooked form of university writing carried out by racialized custodians in their predominantly white university work context, which I am calling *non-regulated writing*. Non-regulated writing is inscription that is neither institutionally restricted nor sanctioned: it neither overtly subverts institutional restrictions nor exists freely outside of institutional control. Non-regulated writing escapes institutional regulation precisely because it works within institutional restrictions. This writing becomes covert—even without writers' intention to conceal or resist—because it does not align with institutional definitions of writing and is thus not perceived as having institutional value. Within the study's particular university context, participants' non-regulated writing remained secreted on the surface of their physical work—displayed for their intended audience yet institutionally illegible.

This study's findings have implications for workplace writing scholarship and higher education policy more broadly. This study contributes to workplace literacy scholarship by expanding definitions of and purposes for workplace writing in the current information economy. Workplace literacy studies (for example, see Brandt, *The Rise*; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*; Findlay, "When Writers"; Haas and Wittee; Ittersum and Owens) have largely conceptualized workplace writing as white<sup>22</sup> professional practice designed to increase employer profits. But the non-regulated writing practices of racialized university custodians contest current conceptions of workplace writing on two main accounts: 1) they expand definitions of workplace writing to include inscription that is directly tied to workplace conditions but is not demanded by employers; and 2) they expand the purposes of workplace writing to reflect workers' desires to learn, communicate, and express themselves. By considering non-regulated writing to be workplace writing, researchers and teachers of literacy can better understand individuals' capacities and desires for literacy in the workplace as well as the consequences of their regulation.

Taking a critical race approach to literacy sponsorship also informs higher education policy more broadly because it highlights the way writing ideologies remain tied to and uphold white supremacy in institutions of higher education. The study suggests universities have much work to do to live up to the claim that they distribute public literacies because race and class workplace hierarchies (and the policies and practices that uphold them) limit the extent to which university workers can use writing for their own benefit in the university context.

### **Whose Writing Counts as Workplace Writing?**

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<sup>22</sup> Literacy Studies have examined the relationship between historical (Vee) and current (Byrd) coding initiatives for African American workers.

Under the conditions of the current political economy, universities have increasingly become neo-liberal workplaces—corporate entities that run on market demands with the goal of increasing profits (Bousquet; Schell; Scott). In order to frame the experiences of manual laborers who work within an institution that teaches but also produces and consumes workplace writing, I bring together scholarship on workplace writing and literacy studies of manual labor. By doing so, I demonstrate the way studies of manual labor can inform workplace writing studies by expanding conceptions of who uses literacy in the workplace as well as the role race and class play in constructing workplace literacies. I also highlight a need for further investigation into the ways that racialized manual laborers use and experience workplace writing within the current economic context.

In the current information economy, writing increasingly equates to employer profits (Brandt, *The Rise*; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*). Writing studies scholars (for example, see Brandt, *The Rise*; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*; Findlay, “When Writers”; Lauer & Brumberger; Spinuzzi; Wardle) have highlighted the importance of examining workplace writers’ experiences to better understand the lived realities of work in the twenty-first century. These studies suggest workers experience regulated conditions in which the value and profit of writing is attributed to employers. Studies of professional writers (Findlay, “When Writers”) and workers in writing-intensive roles (Brandt, *The Rise*) have found that workplace writers are increasingly writing for and as their employers and must follow strict regulations to meet writing labor demands. They have shown, in particular, how writing demands and high-stakes accountability limit writer’s self-expression because writers do not own or control their written work. These studies have importantly exposed the regulatory role writing can play in the lives of some twenty-first century workers. But recent studies have largely conceptualized workplace writing as writing-intensive,

computer- or digital-based practices including documentation, document production, coding, editing, and social media communication. Although writing studies scholarship has highlighted that writing work can be low-wage (Bousquet; Kahn et al.), working-class (Windsor), and practiced by workers of color (Byrd), further examination is required to address how intersections of race, class, and immigration status shape workplace writing conditions, particularly for positions that are not writing-intensive.

Literacy studies of manual labor have shown how immigrant workers of color use workplace literacies and how those literacies are constructed in the context of racism. This study works in a long tradition of literacy scholars in education (Darvin; Hull; Rose), writing studies (Kalmar; Gee et al.), sociolinguistics (Vigorous), and sociology (Hagan et al.) who challenge pervasive assumptions that manual and service workers lack languages and literacies. Literacy studies of manual and service laborers have shown how contexts of racialization tied to language and immigration status shape and often limit how workers can use and be recognized for their literacies within the workplace. For example, scholars have shown how Vietnamese front-line factory workers are blamed for work errors because of deficit-based assumptions about their literacies (Hull) and how Filipino transnational care workers learn to regulate their emotions as a part of state-sponsored literacy programs (Lagman). Literacy scholarship has also shown how laborers leverage languages and literacies in such contexts. Tomás Kalmar's examination of Mexican migrant farm workers details how workers wrote and used phonetic English dictionaries to protest the racially motivated murder of a co-worker. I seek to extend such scholarship by focusing not just on how workers in racialized positions use workplace literacy, but how they use and experience workplace writing in particular. There is a need for further examination of how current workplace conditions—policies, practices, and constructions of writing—shape how

workers can practice writing and how constructions of workplace writing function in relation to racial inequity.

### **Data Analysis**

To address my first research question about the kinds of writing participants used and practiced, I used open coding (Charmaz) to work across interviews and observations to code for kinds of writing, with writing defined as hand-inscribed or displayed alphabetic text on a surface. As I coded, I noticed several instances when regulations prevented participants from writing. I coded these instances as *writing regulation* to address my second research question (what are participants conditions for writing?) to support finding 1 (that they experience conditions which regulate their writing). This code describes instances when writing is institutionally controlled and restricted for non-managerial workers including the restricted use of writing materials like computers and the restricted display of writing like text worn on clothing. When I found almost no writing (as it was institutionally defined) practiced by non-managerial custodial workers, I performed another round of coding (Saldaña) and broadened the definition of writing to non-alphabetic inscription (Boone & Mignolo) that appeared on any surface and was not necessarily inscribed by hand. I noticed inscription that was not institutionally addressed in formal policies or informal messages—it was neither sanctioned nor restricted. I coded these instances as *non-regulated writing*. These codes address the kinds of writing participants use and inform finding 2, that participants used non-regulated writing practices in the workplace to learn, communicate, and express themselves.

### **Findings and Discussion**

In this section, I provide and analyze data to support the study's two main findings. First, I provide participant responses and practices that suggest labor conditions restricted and

regulated their writing as a part of maintaining race and class hierarchies. Then I explain how participants employed non-regulated writing in ways that helped them negotiate institutional writing regulations for their own benefit.

*Finding 1: Restricted Conditions for Writing*

Participants' responses suggest that institutional labor conditions restricted their writing. These restrictions took the specific form of regulation around time, space, materials, and expression which created and reflect a controlled context for custodian writing. These conditions limited participants' ability to use writing to learn, communicate, and express themselves in ways that supported institutional whiteness.

**Restriction of Time and Space**

While workplace literacy scholarship (Brandt, *The Rise*) has highlighted how workplace writers must negotiate demands on their time due to increases in workplace writing, study data suggests that participants' work conditions restricted the time and space they could practice literacies and, in particular, practice writing. This data demonstrates how restrictions simultaneously limited how participants learned and communicated within the institutional context and excluded them from the institutions' writing norms—including its public literacy mission—as a means of upholding institutional whiteness.

Four participants identified institutional time restrictions as a major barrier to their ability to write at work. One of these participants, Roberto, explained how time restrictions were specifically interfering with his ability to prepare for the Spanish General Education Degree (GED). Roberto grew up in a small town outside of Mexico City where he went to school until the sixth grade. Shortly after, he moved to the United States where he began to work and learn English through various jobs in restaurants and laundry factories. At the suggestion of his sister,

who also worked at the university, he had begun working at the university a few months prior to our first interview. In his late thirties at the time of the study, he was taking classes at Latinx-serving community organizations in order to prepare for the Spanish GED and citizenship test. At the time, he was in the process of taking each GED subject test. Since this test was assessed on a computer, he shared that he taught himself to use a computer through videos on the Internet. He first used these videos to look up how to access the Internet on a laptop. Then he started using them to learn to type, studying for the test on his shift break by typing on a borrowed laptop and using GED study guides. He explained his motivation for practicing on the computer included but was not limited to preparing for the GED, “Right now if you want to apply for one job...you use the computer. If you want to apply for insurance, you use the computer.” He shared he needed more time to practice—more time than the two fifteen-minute breaks he was permitted to use the computer at work. He explained, “I will practice by myself and a half-hour is not enough....” Then, referring to the computer, he added, “I don’t use it to check Facebook, I do homework.” Roberto’s statement reflects his desire to write beyond the time allotted to him and the way that institutional time constraints for computer-based writing limited his ability to practice, even with the materials he brought from home. These time limitations prevented Roberto from doing homework. He also highlights a problem of double-standards—that he was not able to do homework deemed appropriate for other institutional actors like the university’s students. Roberto’s response draws attention to how his position is constructed outside of institutional writing norms and how that construction prevents him from doing homework in a public school—an institution that claims to be designed for such work. His experience reflected one of several ways in which participants were constructed as existing outside of institutional membership.

In addition to the restriction of time allotted for writing, participants expressed that their experiences of literacy were also shaped by their spatial and temporal segregation from other university workers. This is a position that Carmen Kynard aptly describes as “the hands and bodies that make [university] spaces livable” yet are “invisibilized” (136). In these ways, sociologist Robin Diangelo reminds us, segregation supports white supremacy because it allows white people to ignore and deny inequity. During new staff training, a safety video emphasized the way custodial workers become invisibilized through institutional messaging and structuring of spatial segregation. The video narrator explained that custodial workers would be working alone. The video specifically defined “working alone” as “not being seen or heard by the public for a long time.” As such, their membership to the public depends on being seen and heard by others from whom they are institutionally segregated. This framing thus positions custodial workers as outside of the public sphere specifically because they cannot communicate with others as a part of institutional design. Because of participants’ particular position as immigrants, the construction of them as outside of the public also leverages racist notions of them as non-citizens. Writing studies scholar Ana Milena Ribero describes how “regardless of their juridical citizenship status,” “when bodies of color are unintelligible as anything but Other, the exclusionary borders of citizenship are (re)drawn to support the hegemony of whiteness...” (41). In this case, positioning workers like Roberto as outside of the public allows the university not to include them in its public literacy mission. It allows the university to absolve itself of responsibility for supporting participant literacies because, as a part of workplace regulations of time and space, they are structured to be outside of the public they serve.

Participants identified how being institutionally segregated had significant consequences for their communication and language learning in ways that amplified their isolation. In

interviews and observations, when I asked about speaking on the job, participants frequently responded that they worked alone. Their responses emphasized that verbal communication depended on having someone to talk to. Roberto explained, “Sometimes you can say hi to the doctors out there. Not like talking.” Saying hi, Roberto highlighted, was not enough. For him, saying “hi” was not “like talking.” These exchanges were not real communication because “talking” required a sustained conversation. And this isolated experience was stratified across racial and linguistic positions. The only people who regularly<sup>23</sup> worked as a team and thus were able to communicate throughout their shift, were two of the three white, English-speaking men on staff. These workers did work classified as projects which meant that their work activities were less routinized, occurred in a variety of spaces, and could be completed together. While one might argue that routinized work after-hours actually provides immigrants an opportunity to work without requiring English (New American Economy), participants expressed that these conditions had consequences for their language practice and sense of belonging in the university.<sup>24</sup> Overall, the institutionally structured temporal and spatial segregation foreclosed opportunities for participants to communicate across languages at the same time that it limited opportunities to build relationships with Spanish-speakers within and across classes of work.

### **Restriction of Materials and Expression**

Literacy scholarship has demonstrated that, within the current economic and social context, institutional and workplace demands for writing have led to deteriorating material

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<sup>23</sup> On occasions, workers of color worked together but, based on my observations and interviews with managers, the two white men worked together the most consistently and permanently.

<sup>24</sup> This segregated position also made writing an important source of communication for participants since they could potentially write messages to workers from whom they were separated. Through hand-written materials, participants could potentially communicate with those whom they could not be physically present. Three participants expressed a desire to write notes to other university actors. Although these notes were unevenly received depending upon their connection to institutional interests, writing functioned as a potential opportunity to communicate with others amidst this segregation.

conditions for academic workers (Bousquet; Takayoshi and Sullivan) and limited self-expression for workplace writers (Brandt, *The Rise*; Findlay, “When Writers”). Study data suggests that the institutional regulation of writing materials functioned as a means of controlling participant expression and, ultimately, of supporting institutional whiteness. Writing materials were restricted for participants and required permission from those higher on the institutional hierarchy. These restrictions associated workplace writing with whiteness in ways that limited how participants were able to represent their lived experiences.

The inequitable distribution of writing materials was evident in workplace policies and the messages surrounding them. During new staff training, a facilitator read aloud a policy that stated custodians could not use computers in offices. He then further communicated the stakes of the policy through a written true or false quiz. A question on the quiz asked, “True or False?” “During a work break, I can use a computer in an office as long as no one is on it.” For workers, this question clarified that, even on a break, certain writing materials were still off limits to them. A violation of this policy would result in a written “work violation.” The manager said he created the quiz as a teaching tool to elicit conversation and catch misunderstandings. But the choice to assess this particular policy (was one of only four policies assessed on this portion of the quiz) also reflects an institutional commitment to it. In addition, communicating computer policies in the context of work violations increased the stakes of using such materials and potentially further deterred non-managerial custodial workers from using them. This example also reflects how institutional definitions of workplace writing, those computer-based writing practices happening in spaces like offices, are constructed in tandem with policies that construct such practices, materials, and spaces as off-limits to custodians.

Participant responses also demonstrated that workplace writing materials were largely restricted for participants. When I asked Roberto about his writing responsibilities for work, he, like most participants, said that he did not do any writing for his job. “Normally we don’t write anything,” he said. Similar to Roberto, five of the six participants reported little to no writing responsibilities distributed to them in the context of their work. Depending on the space they were assigned and the day of the week, second-shift custodial tasks generally included dusting, cleaning the bathroom surfaces, toilets, and mirrors, removing the garbage, breaking down and recycling boxes, sweeping, shoveling, and using machines to vacuum and wax the floors. In the few cases that participants wrote repair requests, they did so by hand-writing items to be fixed on a piece of paper rather than typing them on computers. Only the manager was permitted to enter the information into his computer, to communicate with other institutional departments and thus begin the repair process. As such, those writing materials and responsibilities recognized by the institution were stratified across a custodial hierarchy that was already stratified in terms of workers’ racial, ethnic, and linguistic background. Writing materials (manuals, forms, desks, computers, printers, flyers, whiteboards, pens, papers) were allocated to the manager who mediated all writing responsibilities including building staff emails, supply orders, evaluations, repair requests, and schedules, all of which he entered into the computer. Non-managerial workers could use, for example, the printer to print their pay stubs, but they would need to ask. Writing materials were constructed to be the managers such that he controlled and approved of their distribution. This stratified system positioned non-managerial custodians to seek writing permission from those in positions that were higher in the institutional hierarchy—those positions more aligned with English-speaking and whiteness. The manager mediated participants’ writing and, to some extent, controlled their experience of writing as such.

Requiring participants to ask permission for specific writing materials along these inequitable power relations posed a barrier to access and it constructed writing more broadly as requiring institutional approval. As participants' responses and practices demonstrate, the need to ask for writing permission contributed to an atmosphere of control that limited their ability to employ writing as it was institutionally defined.

Institutional policies even restricted writing on custodians' clothing.<sup>25</sup> In new staff training, the facilitator outlined the standards for dressing. He explained workers should look "neat and clean with no offensive language." They should be particularly "mindful" about the writing they wore on their clothing because the custodial staff is "the most diverse workforce." This was a statistic, he emphasized at least twice during the training. As such, workers must consider what might be "offensive" to others. Only underlining the ambiguous nature of the policy, the facilitator repeated a former employee's clarifying question. Someone had once asked "what if I wore a Michigan state t-shirt?" The facilitator then explained, "That should be fine because it's a sports team." This clothing policy was also assessed on the quiz at the end of the training through the statement "A plain t-shirt with pants, belt, and tennis shoes is appropriate attire." (As such, two of the four questions on the quiz pertained to writing.) In correspondence with this policy, I observed participants wear plain shirts decorated only with brand names and university insignia. On at least one occasion, however, I observed that same facilitator wearing a shirt displaying a round yellow cartoon character in overalls with the written text, "Yes, it's Monday." This example demonstrates how the discretion to express oneself through writing can depend on one's place in the department hierarchy—a place that was highly stratified in terms

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<sup>25</sup> Johnson considers how, in addition to speaking and writing, student dress is a critical literacy practice that students use to challenge normative expectations in educational institutions.

of race and class. Although participants might have technically been able to wear the facilitator's shirt, through their clothing choices, participants demonstrate that wearing such a shirt may not be worth the risk of potential work violations.<sup>26</sup>

During new staff training, the facilitator read from his institutional script and highlighted the cultural diversity of the custodial staff at least three times during the training. He highlighted that the custodial staff was the “most diverse” staff on campus with the largest range of languages. Although seemingly positively framed, these comments obscured the racial stratification across classes of university work and within the department itself by promoting a liberal sense of color-blindness (Bonilla-Silva). In this way, diversity, a coded and less threatening word for race (Ruiz), is created equal no matter where such diversity is concentrated in the university hierarchy (Ahmed). The institution celebrated its diversity in ways that, following Sarah Ahmed, functioned to maintain the university as a white space. It constructed whiteness as the norm and diversity, in this case, racialized immigrant custodians, as something added to that norm. These instances reflected the way higher education institutions commodify racial diversity in order to continue to construct themselves as white (Ahmed). Such institutional initiatives seek to add people of color while obscuring cultures of white supremacy and ultimately reinforcing whiteness as the norm (Ahmed; Patton).

The institution's framing of diversity also functioned as a rationale to restrict the self-expression of that “most diverse workforce.” Messages about text on clothing were framed as protecting the diversity of the workforce, but in practice, the policies reify the self-expression of those in leadership positions—those aligned with whiteness who have the discretion to decide

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<sup>26</sup> This policy reflects a long-standing history of educational institutions controlling brown bodies as a part of regulating those constructed as non-normative in the educational space (Cruz). Such constructions limit the extent to which participants can use writing to communicate and express themselves.

what writing on clothing is offensive as opposed to appropriate. Supervisors do so without the risk of a work violation –without being *written up* as punishment for using writing in ways that are not seen as institutionally appropriate for their particular position. Writing thus functions as an instrument of discipline that controls participant expression and position in line with institutional interests. This instance is yet another example of how the university constructs participants in ways that maintain institutional whiteness through its control and construction of workplace writing.

This controlled context for writing cultivated an atmosphere in which participants questioned whether they were allowed to write about their lived experiences. Henry, a man in his mid-fifties, described feeling conflicted about whether to write about his workplace experiences. Henry was born in Cuba, where he received a college education in exchange for his military service. He was employed as an electrician before moving to the United States with his family as an adult. He described how others in the institution disrespected his work even though he was educated. He explained how he wanted to record his work experiences to share with younger workers. In particular, he wanted to express the frustration he felt when he experienced discrimination. Referencing the racist scripts (Molina) which constructed him as a worker, he expressed feeling undermined because he was “a Latino who cleaned.” In order to share these experiences, including the racism he experienced, he thought about writing a book. He said:

I thought once about writing a book, containing all the stuff that we go through, in general, how we live, the situations that we go through but I said, ‘what would happen later if I present this book? Could it have consequences for the University? Do I have to ask for permission?’

Henry’s response reflects how custodians have been institutionally positioned to ask permission to write. This position shaped his perceptions about writing in the institution and how he was entitled to do so, extending the boundaries of workplace regulation to impact his expressive

practices. In a follow-up conversation, Henry also described how his idea with his supervisor who said sharing the book with the university would “not be a good idea.” This messaging, he explained, discouraged him from moving forward with the project because he knew it would not matter to the university administration. At the same time, he also described worrying about institutional retaliation. He wondered if, by writing, he would put his job at risk. While Henry did not state that any supervisor or institutional policy had explicitly forbid him from writing, his response reflects that, in relation to writing, institutional messages communicated that his writing would be ignored or retaliated against. This instance demonstrates how institutional workplace conditions restricted Henry from using writing to express lived experiences that would contest the university as a white space.

Workplace writing scholarship has highlighted how writing is increasingly controlled and regulated because of its value in the current information economy (Brandt, *The Rise*; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*). Critical race approaches to sponsorship expose how institutional whiteness functions through and depends upon writing and its regulation to maintain the university as a white space. It shows how the institution relies on such regulation to maintain and reproduce the current labor hierarchy and maintains an institutional investment in whiteness. Participants’ experiences suggest that institutions like the university have a particular stake in controlling writing as a way to limit the economic mobility of working-class racialized workers. But it also shows how the institution has a stake in limiting the expression of experiences that challenge the institution as a white space. In the following section, I will present data that suggest participants employ practices that help them negotiate these university race- and class-based writing hierarchies in order to reach their broader goals.

### *Finding 2: Non-regulated Writing*

In the following section, I provide data to demonstrate how participants employed non-regulated writing and how such practices challenge conceptions of workplace writing by expanding its definition and purpose. Workplace writing studies (see Brandt; Farrell, *Making Knowledge*; Findlay, “When Writers”; Lauer and Brumberger; Spinuzzi; Wardle) and studies focused on manual and service laborers (Gee et al; Hull) have largely conceptualized workplace writing as it is institutionally defined by the university: computer-based documentation practices and texts demanded by and benefitting employers. However, study participants demonstrate how, within a workplace context that restricts their writing, they inscribe both within institutional restrictions and outside of traditional conceptions of workplace writing. Their practices show that workplace writing can be inscription that is mediated, inscribed on the surface of bodies and materials, and written outside of required workplace tasks. This writing, what I am calling *non-regulated writing*, should be considered workplace writing because it is activated in workplace contexts and directly responds to workplace conditions. As such, workplace writing becomes more than a vehicle for employer profit and, instead, becomes a means for workers to express themselves and their goals—particularly within workplace contexts of race- and class-based regulation. By failing to include non-regulated writing as a part of workplace literacies, researchers and teachers of literacy risk ignoring the capacities and desires of workers who may be denied access to writing as it is institutionally recognized.

### **Negotiating Bodies and Materials**

Study data suggest participants employed non-regulated writing practices by negotiating their bodies and materials within their restricted workplace setting. In the instances I describe below, participants wrote on hands and work gloves to communicate and express their lived, embodied experiences and to activate their histories within their workplace setting. These

practices allowed them to escape institutional regulations because they did not align with institutional definitions of workplace writing and thus remained institutionally illegible.

A participant named Marco used writing on his body as a means of expressing his lived experience in the workplace. Marco, who was 30 at the time of the interview, was born in a rural part of Mexico. He described how he had been separated from his parents for most of his youth because they moved to the United States. When Marco first came to the United States to join his parents, he was thirteen years old. He went back to Mexico again and returned to the U.S. at 18, when he started to work as a dishwasher. He had continued to work in restaurants and was currently a line-cook while he took courses at the community college. Although he enjoyed his classes, he needed to stop because he was working too much to support his young children. A few months prior to the interview, he had begun working as a custodian at night after his day-shift at the restaurant. He hoped he would be able to save enough money to go back to school in two years or so. During our interview, Marco reflected on his separation from his parents when he was young. He had written letters to his parents while he stayed with extended family in order to express how he was feeling. In the letters, he explained how he felt living without them, mostly that he missed them. Although he never sent the letters, he kept them like a journal. As an adult, he explained, he had gotten tattoos on his hands to reflect that “hard time.” The tattoos, he said, helped him “remember something” and express something that was “significant” to him. But this hard time also followed him into adulthood:

I wanted to fill the [tattoos] someday when I moved on from that hard period...I think in my mind whenever I get through this transition of my life, I can fill it up...maybe I still will.

In this instance, Marco expressed how ink written on the body can, as literacy scholar David E. Kirkland describes, function as “expressions of human experience” (375). Marco’s tattoos functioned like the letters he wrote and never sent, like a journal to express and archive his

experience. Marco also imagined the tattoos as opportunities for revision, inscription that he could fill up one day and physically track his emotional growth. And rather than conveying a message outward to others, he designed the tattoos to display a message for himself—as he described, they were a method to help him “remember something.” Amidst his daily activities and his regulated work context, Marco could use his tattoos to remember something that was important to him.

Marco’s tattoos mattered as a part of his workplace literacies and experiences because they allowed him to express himself and communicate a message to himself within the workplace. In this regulated work context, Marco’s tattoos connected him to his lived, embodied experiences. They functioned as a mode of self-expression that he was denied to express on his body in other forms (like his clothing) during his work shifts. This practice provides insight into how Marco used literacies to shape his workplace experience. His description suggests that his tattoos importantly functioned as an expressive outlet. Within a context where policies regulated many modes of his written expression, Marco could use tattoos on his hands to express things that were significant to him. Although tattoos like Marco’s would not popularly be considered workplace writing because they were not written as a part of his work, they serve an expressive function within the workplace that allowed Marco to connect to his lived experience of migration and family separation. This is particularly important in a workplace context that denies writing as a mode of expression for its racialized workers to maintain the institution as a space for white narratives.

During a shift observation, Henry also used his hands and work gloves as writing materials to express himself, communicate, and learn. As we walked along the hall from one room to another, Henry stopped and asked if he could use my pen. He explained that he preferred

to write as opposed to speak in English. He took the pen and wrote out three capital letters on the side of his plastic glove: D, I, and Y. Pointing to the letters, he asked, “What is DIY?” I said that it stood for the longer phrase “do it yourself.” I searched my memory for a reason that this term might be important to him. Finally, I remembered that he had said he spent his weekends at home studying topics related to electrician work on the Internet. I asked if he had seen the phrase “DIY” on websites for electrical projects. “Yes,” he replied. I explained DIY was a short way of saying that someone could make or fix something themselves instead of hiring someone else to do it. He nodded, tossed the glove in the trash and put on a fresh pair. In this way, Henry used his body in coordination with the material glove to communicate, learn, and extend his knowledge from being an electrician and what he described as his daily studying outside of the workplace. While Henry described how work conditions discouraged him from writing a book to share his experiences, he wrote on his gloved hand to both express and extend knowledge he accumulated in Cuba—knowledge that he said he struggled to apply or receive recognition for in his current work context. Henry used his gloved hand to communicate and learn within his regulated work context. And after he used them for his purposes, he followed university protocol and carefully turned his gloves inside out and placed them in the trash.

Although neither Henry nor Marco hid their writing—Marco displayed writing on his hands without covering his tattoos and Henry wrote on his glove openly in the hallway—by employing their bodies in these ways, both participants were able to reveal their ideas and connect to their lived histories without facing institutional punishment. Their practices and materials remained concealed from the institution, even as they wrote and displayed writing in public, because their writing was not institutionally recognized as such: letters and symbols written on gloves and skin did not align with institutional expectations and definitions of writing.

Within institutional constructions, Marco and Henry's hands were tools for labor rather than writing. In other words, their writing was allowed to exist because it was not institutionally acknowledged or recognized as the kind of writing practiced by their superiors—the kind that might challenge institutional hierarchy. These were not unregulated practices in that they were institutionally sanctioned. They were non-regulated practices that escaped regulation. By appearing to construct and display something other than writing, participants like Henry and Marco were able to use their bodies as one might use screens or pages to bring their lived, embodied histories of separation, migration, and work to bear upon their workplace experience. In this way, they employed workplace writing—practices and materials activated within the context of work and shaped by its conditions—to serve their own purposes in the workplace.

### **Negotiating Relationships and Technologies**

Participants also negotiated relationships and technologies as a part of non-regulated writing practices. They communicated messages by leveraging relationships with those who held positions that were higher in the race and class institutional hierarchy. And they used voice to text programs in order to reach their goals of communicating and expressing themselves. Like the non-regulated practices used by Marco and Henry, these practices similarly escaped regulation because they did not align with institutional definitions of workplace writing and thus were not perceived to challenge institutional hierarchies.

Participants' practices suggest they negotiated relationships to gain access to writing awarded to those associated with whiteness in the workplace. After immigrating to the United States from Mexico as a teenager, Jesus, who is now in his fifties, had worked at the university for over twenty years. Although he did not share his educational history in Mexico, he said he had learned to use the computer through community classes and was currently working for the

university and for his daughter in a side cleaning business she had started. Jesus's responses and practices demonstrated that maintaining his workplace was an important part of his work identity. He had hung plants in the hallways where he cleaned and pointed them out to me as we walked down the hall. He gave me a tour of his whole area (the area he was designated to clean). After describing how he kept his supply closet very organized and clean, he described feeling upset that workers on the day shift, those with whom he shared the closet, had moved his things. In order to communicate how he was feeling to workers with whom he did not overlap shifts, he asked his supervisor to help him make a sign to post in his closet. Jesus told the manager what he wanted to say and the manager typed and posted the sign with his business card attached. Jesus said that he and his supervisor had discussed the message until it reflected exactly what he wanted to communicate. He emphasized that the writing was his idea. In this instance, Jesus negotiated this mediated access to writing materials and resources, including the embodied identities (whiter, native English speaking) awarded institutional writing privileges. In this way, he negotiated the context of permission and temporal and spatial segregation in order to communicate a message of his own.

Henry also negotiated writing practices using technologies to which he had access in the workplace. One day before a team meeting, Henry got up from his seat and walked quickly over to where I was sitting. He took his phone out, held it in his palm, and showed me how to use a voice to text program through a Google Translate App. He held up his phone screen, clicked the microphone, and gestured for me to speak into it. I said, "Hello" and saw my words inscribed across the screen in Spanish. Then he moved the phone closer to his mouth and spoke in Spanish until the English words appeared across the screen, "Now we can communicate with one another," he wrote. Although Henry did not necessarily consider this form of communication

writing, he used his voice to inscribe words across the screen and specifically designed the experience for me to read. Henry's practice allowed him to negotiate institutional restrictions and gain access to writing materials and practices he needed to communicate in the workplace.

In these instances, Jesus and Henry negotiated relationships and technologies available to them to communicate and express themselves through writing. By doing so, they gained access to a means of expressing messages that mattered to them and, specifically, mattered to their workplace experience. These practices also responded to their specific workplace conditions. Henry was able to communicate in a way that alleviated some of his frustration with his English-dominant workplace. And Jesus was able to communicate with those he was isolated from during his night shift in order to maintain a sense of control over his workplace. By inscribing through other people and technologies, they also inscribed outside of institutional definitions of writing such that they were not perceived as threatening institutional race- and class-based hierarchies. Rather than seeking permission to write, Jesus constructed a situation in which his manager could inscribe a message for him. And in a workplace context that restricted time spent typing on writing technologies, Henry used voice to text programs on his phone to translate and communicate in a way that was hands-free, could be done during work tasks, and did not seem to interfere with work or even appear to be writing. These practices demonstrate how participants used non-regulated writing to shape and control their work experience for their own benefit in a context of institutional whiteness.

### **Conclusion: Expanding Definitions of and Purposes for Workplace Literacy**

This study's findings have implications for workplace literacy and higher education policy because they challenge current definitions of and purposes for workplace writing. Participants' non-regulated writing practices highlight the importance of inscription practices

that take place in the workspace but are not assigned by employers. They draw attention to the potential of these practices to allow workers who experience race- and class-based regulation to use writing for their own purposes within the work context—purposes like learning, communicating, and expressing themselves. By expanding conceptions of workplace writing in this way, researchers and teachers of literacy can better understand the how workplace writing matters for more than the economic benefit of employers.

Critical race approaches to literacy sponsorship also inform higher education policy more broadly. This approach highlights how universities claim to support and distribute public literacies at the same time that they restrict the writing of workers in order to maintain their investment in whiteness. Participants' experiences show how the institution has a stake not only in restricting workers' economic mobility but in restricting workers from expressing experiences that challenge the institution as a white space. This study suggests that by restricting and controlling custodian writing as a means of maintaining university race and class hierarchies, white supremacy shapes constructions of and distributions of workplace writing in the university. It suggests that racism remains tied to literacy ideologies that undermine the stated mission of public universities to serve a public good.

## Chapter 4

### **Portable Literacies: Learning across Contexts and Conditions of Movement**

During new staff training, the facilitator projected a safety video in front of seated custodians. The video's narrator, a white man wearing the university's insignia, explained how custodians would need to control the way they moved around the workplace. He lifted a leg to demonstrate the physical gestures involved in walking as he explained that they should step carefully in the snow and ice while "slightly pointing toes outward." The video emphasized not only how but why custodians should control their movement. Custodians should "avoid leaving cords plugged in or unattended so our customers on campus don't trip and fall." Custodians, the video said, were responsible for cultivating an environment where "customers," the staff and students in the institution, could move freely. As such, custodial workers were liable for controlling their movement to ensure the free movement of the staff and students. For a custodial crew in which over half of the workers identified as immigrants, this video reflects how, even after migration, movement and its regulation become caught up in participants' literacy lives and in the institution's work of teaching and learning.

As the training video indicates, custodian movement is institutionally structured and controlled as a part of instituting education for those who are not Latinx custodians—the staff and students for which the university is designed to support. Transnational literacy scholars in education (Gutiérrez; Lam; Pahl and Roswell; Vossoughi and Gutiérrez) and writing studies (Fraiberg et al.; Lorimer Leonard; Nordquist; Proyecto Carrito; Vieira) have highlighted how transnational movement remains deeply tied to learning. But in a work context that tightly regulates their movement, how do adult immigrants learn? What do they learn for? And what can

this tell literacy researchers and teachers about the relationship between learning, literacy, and movement in immigrants' lives?

Drawing from participant-observations, interviews, and videos and photographs taken by participants, this chapter argues that movement amplifies opportunities to learn via portable literacies: the practices participants employ to read, write, listen, and speak<sup>27</sup> on the move. In order to support this claim, this chapter traces portable literacies across settings like workplaces, cars, homes, and religious community sites because such practices are learned and constructed based on conditions both within and outside of work. Participants use portable literacies to physically and materially carry learning objectives and knowledge across contexts and, importantly, into an education institution that rarely positions them as knowledgeable actors. As a whole, this chapter argues that, through participants' use of portable literacies, they negotiate conditions of movement in order to sustain learning across contexts in their lives.

When I discuss learning in this chapter, I am referring broadly to processes of development (Vossoughi and Gutiérrez). I follow scholars in education who challenge normative constructions of learning as a static, linear process in which novices become experts within contained formal education settings. I, following these scholars (Vossoughi and Gutiérrez; Leander and Bolt; Philips and Taylor), instead position learning as a dynamic, nonlinear process that moves. I focus on the specific strategies and practices participants use to meet their desired and wide-ranging learning goals including spiritual, entrepreneurial, scientific, and familial growth. While several participants have and currently attend more traditional classroom-based education programs including ESL classes sponsored by workplaces, community colleges, or community organizations, I focus on the informal learning participants practice across contexts

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<sup>27</sup> I draw from sociocultural theories of literacy (Heath) that argue for the interrelation between reading, writing, speaking, listening.

to highlight how they enact their own learning agendas without direct institutional support. Although these practices are sometimes extensions of classroom work, participants adapt these practices to fit their particular learning preferences and conditions. At work, participants practice their learning pursuits within a context of formal education—one that positions itself as a sponsor of public learning yet does not recognize their self-taught, informal learning practices.

This chapter examines movement on multiple levels. It traces participants' physical movement within local contexts and within specific literacy and learning practices. It also traces the movement of practices as participants materially and physically carry them from one local context into another.<sup>28</sup> Across my analysis, I use the term movement not to mean necessarily free and fluid motion but to include the restriction that is always part and parcel with movement (Fraiberg et al.; Nordquist 35). In many cases, participants' portable practices intersect with regulations that both necessitate and limit their physical movement. These conditions often motivate participants to use or make literacies portable, but they also shape the extent to which materials and practices can be moved and utilized across contexts. Such constraints reflect how social conditions and inequitable power relations within particular contexts (Barton and Hamilton; Heath; Scribner and Cole; Street) shape how participants can engage with and utilize literacies' material affordances. But even as individual practices take various iterations or become stalled (Lorimer Leonard), I argue that portability persists as a learned practice across participants' daily lives.

In this chapter, I make a conceptual contribution to transnational literacy studies by offering the term portable literacies. This concept can help scholars describe and analyze a

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<sup>28</sup> While there is a large body of scholarship on writing transfer or the study of how writers use particular writing practices in other contexts, I am not engaging directly with these conversations because much of this scholarship centers learning within formal education contexts.

literacy and learning phenomenon in which adult immigrants physically and materially carry literacies across local contexts and conditions of movement in order to sustain their learning. By putting workplace learning practices in relation to those used in school, home, and community contexts, literacy researchers and teachers can gain a fuller picture of the conditions, practices, and desires that shape adult immigrant learning.

This chapter also has implications for how adult immigrant literacy learning is recognized and leveraged in relation to institutions. This chapter highlights the largely self-sponsored, informal learning that workers sustain but that is rarely recognized within institutions that sponsor formal education. Pedagogically, education institutions and instructors have much to learn from how and why participants in this study seek opportunities to learn. But as institutions continue to cultivate conditions that restrict their learning, this chapter highlights how participants forward and control their own learning agenda in ways that do not rely upon institutional support.

### **Movement and Learning**

Scholarship in transnational literacy and linguistic anthropology have shown how, within current contexts of racialized border policing and globalization, transnational movement can place inequitable restrictions and demands on adult immigrant learning. They have shown how discourses can lose function as they move into different contexts, specifically because of inequality (Bloomaert; Kell). Kate Vieira has demonstrated how an undocumented status can restrict immigrants' formal education options even by limiting their ability to travel to and from school. And in the case of Filipino migrant workers, Eileen Lagman has shown that learning demands include literacies and languages as well as state-sponsored emotional learning required to maintain national connection. This scholarship underlines how immigrants of color in

particular must constantly learn because their knowledge and skills are inequitably “revalued” as they move (Lorimer Leonard). Their position requires learning content as well as social and emotional strategies necessary to negotiate constantly shifting and often increasing demands on their learning.

But within such unjust and inequitable migration systems, scholars in transnational literacy studies, Latinx/Chicanx studies, and linguistic anthropology have also shown how, within particular conditions, movement can support learning such that practices not only lose but sustain and/or gain function as they move (Kell). Transnational literacy scholars in education have shown how, for families and youth, histories of migration and current transnational movement can be leveraged for literacy learning through materials (Pahl and Roswell; Vieira), digital communication practices (Lam; Lam et al.), and genre knowledge (Rounsaville). And transnational literacy scholars in writing studies have shown how moving vehicles can offer spaces for both creating (Nordquist) and sharing knowledge (Proyecto Carrito) that challenges institutional and state-sponsored surveillance. Scholarship in Latinx/Chicanx studies and bilingual education further exposes the critical rhetorical (Martinez et al.), literate (Gutiérrez), and embodied (Anzaldúa) knowledge immigrants learn as they move across and between languages and cultures. Such practices and materials build upon histories of movement in immigrants’ lives and provide a method to carry that knowledge into new spaces for the purposes of teaching and learning.

In a global context where particularly racialized immigrants experience inequitable demands on their learning, literacy scholars, teachers, and activists have leveraged movement to showcase immigrant knowledge and promote and expose learning. But amidst a work context that tightly regulates their movement, how do adult migrants learn? What do they learn for? And

what can this tell literacy researchers and teachers about the relationship between learning, literacy, and movement in migrants' lives?

### **Methods: Accounting for Participants' Practices Within and Outside of the Workplace**

Drawing from transnational literacy studies methodologies in education, I adopt a "multi-sited ethnographic sensibility" (Marcus; Vossoughi and Gutiérrez) that traces participants' learning practices across contexts including a university, cars, homes, and religious community sites. This approach provides insight into a literacy phenomenon (Bartlett and Varvuz) while also accounting for participant practices that often go unacknowledged in educational institutions like the university where participants work (Bernal, *Learning*; Moll et al.). I use a combination of interviews, multi-sited participant-observations, and videos and photographs taken by participants to consider how they experience and negotiate movement as a part of learning across their daily lives.

#### *Data Collection*

While I draw upon all of the methods outlined in the introduction for the analysis in this chapter, I use methods that specifically account for movement across contexts in line with a multi-sited methodological framework. I employ participant-observations to trace embodied practices as participants move within and across spaces as well as the materials they use on the move. In addition to these observations, I include videos (Cardinal; Nordquist) and photographs taken by three participants who agreed to record their practices reading, writing, speaking, and listening outside of the workplace. I chose to make these videos and photographs participatory so that participants could construct, compose, and identify their literacy practices thereby centering their perceptions of this data. In order to trace movements not only across space, but across time, I combine these methods with interviews, including a brief literacy history interview that helps

me contextualize their practices and investigate relationships between past and present movement in participants' lives. This combination of methods helps me understand how and why participants learn by carrying literacies into, out of, and beyond the workplace.

### *Analysis*

Across the data I collected, I engaged in qualitative analysis that moved from open to closed coding. During my first round of open coding (Charmaz), I used the code movement regulated across contexts. I coded for participants' experiences when restricted movement was state-sponsored or institutionally and socially forwarded through policies and social practices in four contexts: university work, cars, religious community sites, and homes. In a second round of coding, I used closed coding to specifically analyze participant responses to this regulation or the ways in which participants practiced literacies (defined as practices involving reading, writing, speaking, listening) within such regulation. When I noticed practices like those involving the watching and listening of Youtube videos reappeared across contexts, I used portable literacies as a code family to describe practices and materials participants used to move those practices within and across contexts. This code answered research question 1. I also deliberately coded for non-examples which I named contingent portability and described practices and materials that proved portable in some contexts but not in others due to different and inequitable social conditions. To answer research question 2, I coded the portable practices for motivations and purposes. I used the code family learning to describe the main motivation or purpose I observed and participants described. Sub-codes within those categories include specific types of learning like spiritual, emotional, linguistic, and assessment learning as well as evidence of learning—although the majority of practices involved more than one type of desired learning outcomes.

### **Portable Literacies**

In the following sections, I put participants' university workplace conditions and practices in relation to those they experience across other contexts in their lives including cars, religious community sites, and homes. These contexts are not fixed containers (Fraiberg et al; Nordquist) —the data demonstrates how participants carry practices from one context into another. However, I have, to some extent, separated them here for the purposes of analysis. I begin by examining how and why participants negotiate conditions of movement in the education institution where they work. Then I examine how they carry portable literacies across other contexts in their lives and sometimes back into the workplace for the purpose of learning, teaching, and showcasing knowledge. By putting these experiences side by side, literacy scholars can better understand how and why participants sustain learning across various conditions of movement in their lives.

#### *University Work Part 1: Runs*

Recent scholarship in transnational literacy studies has examined the relationship between movement, labor, and learning in terms of movement across national borders (Farr, *Rancheros*; Lagman; Lorimer Leonard; Meyers; Vieira). But participants' experiences suggest that local conditions of movement also continue to shape their learning. In this section, I will specifically examine how participants were required to move through university spaces as they cleaned. They moved through hallways, up and down elevators, in and out of classrooms, labs, and offices as they cleaned. And as a reflection of this constant movement, custodians' designated cleaning paths were called "runs." Participants were required to move through university spaces, yet their paths were also, to some extent, institutionally restricted through practices and policies that outlined where and how they were permitted to move. It was within this context that they demonstrated a desire to learn while they worked and a need to make

literacies portable in order to do so. As they pursued broader goals related to language, education degrees, citizenship, and religion, they employed and created portable literacies to learn within their particular conditions of movement.

Within the university context, participants experienced regulated movement in terms of the spaces they were institutionally permitted to enter and the ways in which they were institutionally permitted to move. I have discussed in previous chapters how custodians' movement and its accompanying restriction was, in many cases, regulated through the construction of literacy materials and practices. For example, written signs communicated who could and could not enter spaces, English language assessments were required to gain access to the building's labs, and students and staff attached notes to doors to indicate that custodians could not enter. And even when writing did not communicate a barrier to entry, custodians were required to ask permission to enter spaces by knocking on the door and announcing themselves by saying "custodian." Participants' paths were also controlled through writing. Their schedules were written out by the manager on a large white board in his office. During team meetings each day, the manager explained substitutions by naming who's run a worker would be completing. Rather than describing what they would do, he said that they would "be" the absent worker. For example, if Marco was covering Roberto's area, he would say "Marco, you are Roberto today." This messaging suggests that, for the institution, individuals' identities were tied to the paths along which they moved and cleaned. This construction thus further highlighted a tension between participants' ownership of the spaces and the restricted way they were institutionally permitted to move through the them. The institutional connection between identity and assigned run also increased the stakes attached to participants' movement.

Finally, participants' movement was also controlled by the institution materially through the distribution of keys. Each shift, workers lined up at 5:15pm, one by one in the hallway outside of the manager's office. A few workers turned around to talk to the person behind them, but most faced forward and waited to pick up the keys for their run. One by one, they took their keys, undid their belt buckles, and hooked the keys to their belt loops. Most went through these motions as they walked down the hallway to their allotted spaces. In interviews, participants explained then that, each night at 1:30am, they lined up again to return the keys before going home. While non-managerial participants identified these processes as simply another routine, the keys also reflect the workplace hierarchy and systems of inequitable access to university spaces. Workers could only use the keys in specific ways. For example, they were not allowed to use the keys to open rooms for others, a policy which Roberto claimed made one student dislike him. When I asked the lead worker, André, the main difference between his work and that of non-lead workers, he did not report having more power, responsibility, or even more required writing. Being lead worker, he said, "means having more keys." Keys functioned as literal, material markers of temporary access to controlled institutional spaces. André also carried the keys on his belt buckle; but as we spoke, he unclasped a carabiner to show me he had to use an extra strong latch to hold his heavy key ring. The weight of André's keys concretely marked his status as did his ability to skip the line and get the keys from the manager's office. While, in the case of non-managerial custodians, keys institutionally reflected their temporary and limited access to the university's educational spaces.

#### *University Work Part 2: Learning on the Run*

As the last section indicated, participants moved along paths that were, in many ways, institutionally regulated. But as they did so, they also carried and, in some cases, pushed portable

literacies that helped them control their learning as they moved. All six participants described or demonstrated how they engaged in self-directed informal learning using digital devices like smart phones and iPads so that they could pursue linguistic, assessment-based, and spiritual study during their shifts. Their practices demonstrated how they engaged in portable literacy practices that helped them control their learning on the run.

Roberto shared how he studied for assessments on a smart phone that he carried throughout his shift. As I described in chapter three, when I shadowed Roberto, he pulled his phone out of his pocket and showed me how he located Youtube videos to help him study for the Spanish GED and citizenship test. During work shifts, he explained, he listened to videos about US history in order to prepare for that portion of the GED assessment. He said he was studying whenever he could because he needed “more practice.” The test was made up of several subject sections and he shared that this practice was really important because, every time he needed to retake a portion of the test, he needed to pay for the exam. He still had several sections to go. Roberto was able to listen to the videos while he worked because the practice did not interfere with his work and fit within the safety regulations. He kept the phone in his pocket and put in the bud of his headphones in one ear, following institutional safety regulations that ensured he could hear in the case of an emergency. This practice was also hands-free which allowed him to complete work tasks—to wipe surfaces, dump garbage, break-down boxes, and move his cart—while listening and learning.

Roberto also used the phone to manage the affective responses brought about by his work conditions. As we were finishing up the first portion of his shift, Roberto shared that he had learned to use his phone to manage his boredom during his shift. During our interview, Roberto had described himself as liking to talk. So when I asked if he ever got bored working by himself,

he first said “not tonight” which I interpreted to mean that our conversation had kept him from being bored this particular evening. Then he added, “I listen to my phone.” His phone functioned not only as a study tool but as a way to control his affective response to working conditions that kept him moving and isolated him from social interaction. His responses demonstrate how portable literacy materials like phones served as a counterpoint to experiences with materials like keys—those also carried on his body but heavily regulated by the institution. In this case, Roberto’s portable literacies allowed him to control his experience of work as he moved in ways and through spaces for which he had less control.

When Marco used his phone to learn on his run, he did so specifically for spiritual purposes. During one of my observations, Marco shared that spiritual practices like reading the Bible had helped him recover from “a very hard time.” He described the difficulties he had faced since separating from his children’s’ mother the previous year. Reading the Bible, he said, helped him “keep his mind in a different spot.” I interpreted this to mean it allowed him to move his attention to something other than the hard time he was facing. We went on to discuss a book that he was interested in reading about recovery. A few days later, I asked what he had thought about the book, and he excitedly explained that he had found it as an audio version so that he could listen to it at work. That way, he said, he “could still sleep.” For Marco to read after his shift, at 1 or 2 am meant that he would need to choose between reading or sleeping before he began his restaurant job early in the morning. If he wanted to sleep, he needed to find a way to learn this information at work. But because he could not hold the book to read and move about his work duties, he found an audio version so that he could listen on the move. He described listening to the book as he emptied the garbage and moved supplies during his shift and shared

that he especially liked “the parts about spirituality.” In these ways, Marco constructed a practice that allowed him to pursue his spiritual development as he moved and worked across the space.

While many participants made literacy materials portable by carrying their phones in their pockets or backpacks, Tómas used his cleaning supply cart to move his materials. As I followed Tómas around his shift, he expressed a desire for “more practice” with English. He had taken English classes at the community college but currently did not have enough time to continue them. Tómas described how he now used Youtube videos for language learning. By entering the search terms, “Youtube, English, free” on a Youtube app he was able to “to learn more conversations, for communication” he said. He showed me how he propped the phone and iPad up on the top of his cart so he could watch videos as he moved across his area.

This practice allowed Tómas to access learning materials and control particular aspects of his learning. It allowed him to leverage the university’s Internet since Tómas and Roberto both reported the Internet was unreliable where they lived. Tómas said the videos were also particularly helpful because he could go at his own pace by replaying the text. He specifically contrasted this to his experience in ESL classes because he liked to direct his own learning. He also appreciated that he could see and even record the words he learned because Spanish looks like it sounds but English does not. For this reason, holding his phone in his pocket would not have been sufficient for his purposes. The cart allowed him to prop his iPad so that he could look at it as he moved. And as I described in Chapter 2, Tómas even kept pens and thumb-size post-it's in a pocket on his cart so that the materials, like his smartphone and iPad, could move with him as well. This practice demonstrates how, in response to his particular conditions and desires, Tómas transformed his cleaning cart from a university material designed to keep him moving and cleaning into portable literacies, a learning tool on wheels.

This section has outlined how, in a work context that tightly regulates their movement, participants sustain their learning via portable literacies. It shows how they carry literacy materials in pockets and prop them on carts to sustain their bodies and minds as a part of pursuing their desired learning goals. In particular, it shows how participants utilize the material affordances of video and audio to simultaneously move and learn within their work conditions. Video-based practices that provide opportunities for self-directed learning on the move stand in stark relief to the institutional video designed to teach participants how to control their movement. Through their experiences, participants demonstrate how they construct practices that allow them to direct their learning amidst institutional conditions that attempt to control their movement.

In the following sections, I trace the way participants carried, constructed, and adapted practices outside of their workplace for the purposes of learning. By doing so, it becomes clear that participants carry many of their practices from their cars, religious community sites, and homes back into their workplace. They do this to sustain and showcase their learning in an education institution designed to support the learning of others. Focusing on these out-of-workplace contexts further centers participant knowledge and desires to illuminate the linguistic, literate, entrepreneurial, and spiritual learning this often goes unacknowledged within the institutional context of their work.<sup>29</sup>

### *Cars: Literacy on Wheels*

Transnational literacy scholars have demonstrated that, within particular conditions, transportation can both restrict and promote teaching and learning (Nordquist; Proyecto Carrito;

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<sup>29</sup> When I asked two managers what reading, writing, speaking, listening their staff did on the job, they never described these practices. The focal crew's manager did state his staff was permitted to "listen to music or whatever." I think this potentially reflects a broader assumption about the kind of listening participants were engaging in based in assumptions about what literacy and learning looks like.

Vieira). In this study, participants acknowledged the social and economic difficulties transportation posed in their lives. Several participants shared they regularly negotiated rides to work with family and friends because public transportation was not readily available during the second shift. And Marco biked long distances to and from his two jobs in order to save money for a car. But participants who had access to cars also constructed them as important vehicles for learning and reflecting their knowledge. Similar to the way Tómas used his cart to carry learning practices across university hallways and rooms, participants used their cars to leverage movement that was already a part of their lives—to wheel literacies across contexts in order to learn and showcase their knowledge.

In three separate observations, participants drove me from the university team meeting space to their assigned cleaning space in other buildings a few blocks away. As they did so, they showed me how their cars functioned as meaningful tools for learning on the move. During one of these drives, Henry showed me how he propped his phone on the dashboard to practice language videos as he drove. Then as a part of further data collection, he took a video of himself driving while listening to a citizenship test educational video. In the video Henry took, he is visible using his hand to prop up his smartphone on his dashboard and played the audio through the car speakers. He explained verbally, “Well, right now I’m going to start driving and I’m in my car where I listen to my citizenship lessons in English every day, so I get to improve my listening and my vocabulary.” Here Henry exemplified participants’ consistent desire to not only learn, but to practice and learn many things at once. In this case, Henry layered literacy activities: citizenship test studying and language learning while simultaneously listening and driving. In an interview, he explained that he studied during every moment that he could. He also took a video of himself watching the same video on his home television screen. Listening to

these videos in the car allowed him to practice as he moved between his many responsibilities and to pick up his studies where he left off at home or work. Just as participants demonstrated how they propped their digital devices on their carts at work, Henry similarly transformed his car dashboard into a moving desk as a part of his portable literacies.

In the same video Henry took of himself driving, he turned the wheel and drove out onto the road while the audio played over the car speakers. The narrator could be heard explaining how to prepare for the beginning of the test. First, he described how to interact with the test administrator, specifically how test-takers must manage their emotions as a part of this initial meeting. The narrator said: “And I want you to know that you should not be nervous when you meet face-to-face with the immigration officer, I want you to remember that this is a friendly meeting, this is a very special moment because you will become an American citizen.” They continued by describing how, perhaps counter-intuitively, citizenship test-takers may be assessed on their movement, or at least on how well they can explain how they move. They explained in Spanish that the test administrators will engage in seemingly casual friendly conversation, “but from the moment you arrive at that office, at that point the exam begins. They are going to start asking you questions in English, they are going to ask you if you have been waiting a long time to see the officer, how are you, if someone had a problem getting there, finding the office, because they want to see your skills.” As such, test-takers must not only be able to reach the office successfully and maintain composure along the way, they must be able to understand and explain in English how they moved. In this way, their ability to describe their movement became an assessment of language skill and subsequently a condition for citizenship. Framed this way, even traveling to the test became a high-stakes assessment. By listening to these materials, Henry thus used the car as a means to arrive at the test and as a means to learn how to describe his

arrival. The car became not only a state-regulated mode of transportation but also a tool to negotiate his status within the state.

Javier<sup>30</sup> also demonstrated how he used his car to practice literacies on the move. Javier was born in Mexico where he had grown up, attended elementary school, and worked on his father's farm. He had worked in restaurants and for himself as a carpenter in the US before coming to work at the university where he had now worked for over twenty-years. During interviews and observations, Javier expressed his commitment to his religion. He described that he had a strong faith and credited God with saving his life on several occasions. In a photograph he took, Javier captured himself reading the Bible in his car. In the photograph, Javier's upper body was visible seated behind the wheel. His face was concealed behind a book with "Bible" written on the cover. As he held the book in both hands and rested it against the wheel, he was dressed in a collared shirt and tie which potentially meant he was reading before or after a religious service. (He had shared several pictures and I had seen in person that he wore a suit to service each week.) Perhaps reflecting the time-constraints he faced as he moved between one context and another, in the photograph, he remained strapped into his seat. This particular practice of reading the Bible was not only important to him but, as he repeated throughout our conversations, it was important to his wife who, he said, was always telling him to read the Bible in his spare time. Here, the car awarded him a space to engage in religious learning and practice as he moved between contexts like work and home.

Javier's picture, however, also reflected how book-based reading practices were more difficult to use on the move. Although books are portable in that he can carry them into different

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<sup>30</sup> During an interview, Javier had said that his children's education was his utmost priority. He had even worked with an interpreter to serve on the university congress in order to see if his daughter could get tuition remission because he worked at the university. He learned that she could not.

spaces, to some extent, reading requires stillness and both hands—conditions that conflict with those Javier experienced at work and even while driving. But rather than not practice because the conditions did not allow it, he constructed literacies to meet the conditions of his labor. Javier used a Bible app to listen as he moved about the workplace. He did so in English, he said, so he could learn about God and practice English at the same time. Although particular regulations connected to his work status continued to shape how literacies become portable in Javier's life, he continued to work within such conditions by adapting his literacies to make them portable. This adaptation enabled him to pursue his own learning agenda and to do so on the move without interfering with his work activities.

Tómas also employed his vehicle for literate purposes by using writing on his car as a promotional tool that drew attention to his wife's business and reflected the skills and knowledge she had learned as a part of the business. In order to explain this instance, I must first return to a workplace observation where Tómas explained that his wife, Teresa, who was also a custodial worker, had her own decorating business. On the weekends, she made decorations for events like baptisms, quinceañeras, birthdays, and weddings. He showed me two portable literacies that they used to promote the business: a business card that he kept in his wallet and the business's Facebook page he showed me on his phone. For four years, he explained, his wife had created different themes, events for up to 450 people and he helped by putting up lights and doing some construction. He praised her for her creativity and her education, describing how she travelled to take "classes in Miami and Orlando." Several weeks later, I saw Tómas as I left a team meeting observation one evening. He honked and waved from his van. I caught a glimpse of Teresa seated next to him. As the car rolled past, I also noticed a sign on the side of the van with the name of his wife's company, their family name, printed in bold letters. This sign, a written

material attached to their vehicle, allowed Tómas and Teresa to promote their business as they moved from one space to another. In this way, they leveraged movement to amplify Teresa's opportunities to learn in the context of her business and showcase her entrepreneurial knowledge. Even when the car sat in the parking lot at rest, it allowed Teresa and Tómas to carry their family-owned and controlled business into the institutional space. Through their construction of portable literacies like their car, business card, and Facebook page, Teresa and Tómas also constructed themselves as workers and learners pursuing learning outside the education institution for which they worked.

For Javier, Henry, and Tómas, cars functioned as spaces to learn and surfaces to showcase knowledge as they moved between the many tasks of their daily lives. Through portable literacies in and on their vehicles, they extended and adapted practices from other contexts to pursue their desired goals involving national belonging, spiritual worship, family entrepreneurship. While scholars (Vieira) have highlighted that cars do not provide racialized immigrants sanctuary from state regulation, participants' experiences provide insight into the ways that participants use their vehicles as a part of portable literacies to sustain and reflect their learning.

#### *Churches: Learning at a Distance*

So far, examples in this chapter have shown how participants pursued spiritual learning across contexts like work and cars via portable literacies. In this section I examine how participants pursue learning within the context of their religious community sites. Transnational literacy scholars have shown how religious sites function as centers of literacy and learning for immigrants post-migration (Ek; Farr, *Literacy*; Hones; Sarroub; Vieira). In this section I specifically analyze how two participants, Marco and Javier used video-based practices and

performances as portable literacies to help them negotiate their conditions of movement and move their learning practices into and beyond religious spaces.

Within the conditions of his religious community site, Marco watched a video-mediated performance that enabled him to learn at a distance. I asked Marco if I could attend the Catholic Church where he said he attended a Spanish-speaking service every Sunday. I waited outside and watched him drive up and honk his horn to signal his arrival before he turned into the parking lot. He walked over to meet me at the doorway and introduced me to his two children. One child was sleeping on his shoulder and the other held his hand. We squeezed ourselves into a pew just as the service began. The children climbed on their father, one crying and one poking the other despite Marco's attempts to quiet them. After a few minutes, a woman in the pew behind us tapped Marco on the shoulder. He turned to me and explained she had suggested we go to the basement where the kids could play and we could watch the service on a television. We walked downstairs and took seats at folding chairs by a television in the corner of the room. The boys were momentarily captivated; they stared at the screen but soon began to climb again. Marco did not comment on the experience of moving from the pews to the basement so I do not know exactly how he felt about it. He accepted the resource the church member shared and moved us to a different space in which his children could play without disturbing the service. That move allowed him to watch the service and provided his children space to move. The video provided him access to mass as he participated in a kind of distance learning on site—one in which the live event happened a few floors above our heads. Similar to the spiritual text he listened to as he worked, the video and audio continued to support Marco's spiritual development amidst his particular conditions of movement.

Marco identified the church as an important source of spiritual learning that he credited for his recent growth and recovery. As Marco and I continued to sit at the chairs in front of the television, I asked about a previous conversation in which he said the church had “really helped” him get through a hard time. He said he had traveled with the church to a nearby city to attend an all-male retreat. He had heard about the opportunity through a church service one day and he decided he wanted to go, he said, because he had been feeling really bad since his break up with his children’s mother. He wanted to learn how to feel better. When I asked what was most helpful about the retreat, he said they performed scenarios. While watching, he said, he could “really see” himself in the performers. He described that it was both difficult and helpful to see his behavior played out before him. The retreat, which took place in a different city, moved Marco outside the context of his day to day activities so that he could focus on his growth. Additionally, the performed scenarios allowed him to “really see” himself. I interpreted this to mean that the performance externalized his behaviors so that he could watch and learn from them. In this way, the performance linked embodied and physical motion—moving beyond himself and his everyday activities—with movement as learning, as development. As opposed to other instances, I have discussed in this chapter, this experience did not involve a literacy material that was externally and materially carried on his body or another moving tool. But this performance, he said, stayed with him. He could still see himself in the performance as he described it to me. As such, the performance became a part of his embodied learning experience and one that he could physically carry back home.

In his religious community site, Javier also observed a performance—one he made portable by recording it on his phone. In one of our many conversations, Javier had explained that he left the Catholic Church for a Protestant branch after he immigrated to the United States.

He wanted, he said, a church that was “more open.” I asked if I could attend a church service with him after Javier showed me a picture of his family dressed up for church one day. He agreed and I arranged to meet him and his family at the church. He explained that it was located across town from his home, but he and his wife enjoyed it so much that they made the trip. He also said that it was good timing for me to visit the church because I could attend a special Christmas service. When I arrived at the church with my partner, Javier greeted us at the door wearing a brightly colored suit and tie. He introduced me to his wife and daughters and invited us to sit together in a pew.

During the service, children from the congregation engaged in two performances. About half-way through the service, a staff member projected a video in which children from the congregation explained what Christmas meant to them. The children’s faces filled up the screen while, moving between English and Spanish, they described that Christmas meant presents, family, and Jesus. Then toward the end of the service, children from the congregation rose and walked from the pews over to the stage. They sang and then acted out the birth of Jesus. Each child stepped forward with a poster displaying a nativity drawing. Crayoned pictures of angels swayed in the air as they lifted large poster boards above their tiny heads. In both of these performances, Javier and his wife joined others in the crowd who removed their phones from their purses and pockets and recorded videos of the performances. They even took videos of the videos—creating a kind of nested video practice. By doing so, they were able to capture their children’s performances—evidence of what they had learned about the holiday—and carry them beyond the context of the church. Through the phone he carried on his belt, Javier was able to bring these photographs into the university. During a team meeting, it was pictures and videos like these that Javier had first used to show his family to me.

Amidst their specific conditions of movement within the churches, Marco and Javier used portable literacies—tvs on wheels, performances, and phones in pockets—to help them sustain and showcase spiritual learning for themselves and their families. And as they carry learning into and out of these spaces, they continue to learn and reflect their knowledge when they move to contexts beyond the church.

*Moving into the Institution: Portability's Affordances and Constraints*

Literacy scholars in education and Latinx/Chicanx studies have long promoted strategies to help education institutions recognize and leverage learning that takes place outside of school (Bernal, *Learning*; Elenes; Moll et al; Villenas). Participants in this study show how adult immigrants that work in schools also carry their learning from out-of-school contexts into education institutions. In this section, I analyze Henry and Javier's experiences carrying learning from their homes into their university workplace. While their ability to construct portable practices remains wrapped up in institutional power relations and recognition, their efforts importantly reflect a desire to sustain practices that they have learned across their learning histories by carrying them into and across their current contexts.

Henry used and adapted portable literacies to transport his scientific knowledge into the university. In order to do this, he drew from his professional history as well as the continued education he pursued at home. Over the course of several months of communication, Henry expressed frustration that he had not been able to pursue his profession as an electrician since immigrating to the United States from Cuba. As I have described in other chapters, Henry expressed feeling institutionally undervalued, a status he related to race and language discrimination. To demonstrate how difficult it was for him to apply his knowledge in the workplace, he described a time at work when he had seen a man working on the lights. He said

he watched to see what they were doing and to see if he could help. But when he noticed he said, “would you like something? Do you want to know about something?” And I [have said], “no, no, no, no, no, just looking, knowing, I like electricity, I’m just looking” He interpreted this to mean that they did not want or think that he could help. This experience undermined his desire not only to learn but also to teach in the university context—to put his professional knowledge to institutional use. Finally, Henry described how he asked the other worker, “well, but what you have there, can I have a pencil?” And I have drawn the circuit and he said, ‘oh my God! How do you know that?’ And I told him, “because that’s my life, I studied it, I went to University’.” In our conversations, Henry continued to express his commitment to learning and described how he spent his weekends reading about electrical projects on the internet. It was important to practice at home, he said, because of the time-constraints he faced using computers in the university. At home, he was able to set up the computer and learn at his own pace. In a series of videos translated from Spanish, Henry recorded and explained some of the projects he constructed at home.

In one video, Henry described an electrical project he had invented. As he did so, Henry used pedagogical and rhetorical strategies to assert his professional knowledge and teach his audience, whom I explained would, through the dissertation, largely be university instructors and researchers. At the beginning of the clip, Henry spanned across a garage and zoomed into a wooden table covered with wires and bulbs. He began to speak saying, “Well, this is another one of my innovations.” He immediately emphasized his position as a knowledgeable actor—one capable of invention. By framing his project this way, Henry showed that he had not only learned something, he had generated new knowledge. His innovation provided material evidence of his knowledge and his hard work to learn it—aspects of his identity he emphasized throughout our

time together. He went on to say, “This is a 20-Watt fluorescent cold light lamp. Supposedly, the energy consumption is somewhat higher and I’m going to do as follows. I’m going to stop for a moment right now so you can see. I’m going to, to start by dismantling the fluorescent lamps and the transformers...” He narrated strategies particularly pertaining to the video mode like pausing to zoom in. And he used more general teaching strategies like breaking down the process into parts and repeating the main point. Perhaps Henry applied instructional strategies he had learned from watching his own electrical, citizenship, and language videos because he had cultivated expertise about the instructional video genre. He went on: “...and then I’ll go to buy the LED tubes which save more, it’s more efficient and less expensive, and it doesn’t affect the ecology either and, hence, it’s more cost-effective, excuse me for being repetitive, but it’s going to be cheaper for the energy consumption in each household.” As he said this, he demonstrated rhetorical skill by weaving the project’s significance across his explanation. He provided a clear justification for the project and emphasized his desire to use his knowledge and experience to help others.

Although Henry did not carry this particular innovation into the university (perhaps because it was large and cumbersome to move), he did employ a more portable material to share what he had learned. One day during a team meeting, I entered to see Henry sitting in his usual seat at the front of the room. I noticed something in his hand and asked him what it was. He walked over to my seat and held up an empty light bulb container. He bent down to my level, rested the container on the table in front of me, and pointed to the wattage number with his finger. Roberto began to translate for us, explaining that Henry said the university was using the wrong kind of light bulbs—bulbs that were wasting a lot of electricity. These bulbs, he said, would save the university electricity and money. He had brought this material to show his

manager by slipping it into his pocket and carrying it into the workplace. It would function as a teaching tool to help him teach his supervisor across languages and more specifically, help the institution save money. In this case, Henry leveraged portability to carry his professional knowledge and experience into the workplace. This portable practice helped Henry share his knowledge with others and construct himself as a knowledgeable actor for a university audience he felt underestimated him.

In contrast, Javier's experience demonstrated that certain practices were not mobile from home to workplace. Javier captured a photograph of himself signing his name. In the picture, he sat behind a wooden table in his home. His head was bent over a piece of paper and he held a pen in his hand. On a piece of paper in front of him, words were visible across the paper as he wrote "my name is [Javier]" in English across the page. During his literacy history interview, his dictated memoir, and his participant photographs Javier emphasized the importance of writing his name as a mark of ownership. The first time he mentioned this was in the context of his literacy history. He explained that when he needed to leave school in Mexico to work and help support his family, his father often told him he needed to be able to sign his name. To help him, his father quizzed him on the alphabet as they worked. He remembered the ways they traced letters together. This practice is still important to him, he explained, because he uses it across various contexts in his life. He needed to write his name when he signed checks in order to get and receive money. He also provided a signature to lease a new car that allowed him to take his wife to work and his children to school. Finally, he shared, he recently signed papers to adopt his son from a relative who had to travel back to Mexico. Although he never expected to have another child, he was particularly excited to have a son in his family of three daughters. In these ways, Javier was able to apply a literacy practice to benefit himself and his family and negotiate

some of his conditions of movement. He moved his family to their desired locations, moved money into his bank account, and intervened when other families faced separation as a part of their conditions of movement. By signing his name across these contexts, Javier was able to move a practice he had learned and valued from his father in Mexico to support his own family in the U.S amidst various conditions of movement.

But Javier explained that this was not a practice he was able to move into the workplace. Even though he could pick up a pen and paper and physically transport it, signing his name was not a part of his daily activities in the university, at least in terms of marking his ownership. It was the supervisor who signed off on paychecks and hours. Also, few items required signatures because of their digital form—a form to which, as a custodian, Javier was not granted access. Thus, this practice, although importantly portable across contexts in his life, was also limited in the context of his workplace's institutional hierarchy. While Javier experienced this conflict in portability, this example also demonstrates the importance of looking to spaces like homes and community settings—those contexts beyond the institutional workplace—to better understand the learning of adult immigrant workers like those participating in this study. Understanding Javier's practices in contexts outside of the workplace highlights what he has learned across his life and why that learning matters to him. It also provides insight into the consequences of Javier's workplace conditions and the learning those conditions do not make visible. In this case, signing shows ownership for Javier and not being allowed to sign in the University is further evidence of the way literacy practices shape who is and who is not a part of the university community.

Henry and Javier's experiences demonstrate how portable literacies exist within unequal power relations and institutional hierarchies that shape the extent to which they can carry what

they have learned from their homes into the university. These instances highlight limitations of portability, particularly when its usefulness relies on institutional recognition. But their experiences also importantly highlight their desire to carry practices from their learning histories into and across their current contexts.

## **Conclusions**

By making literacies portable, participants bring their own learning agenda—whether they are practicing English, promoting a business, studying for an exam, or exploring their spirituality—into and across various contexts. This process matters because it allows participants to learn within varying conditions of movement, most of which, as a result of white, English-language, North American supremacy, remain outside of their immediate control. As such, portability helps them sustain literacy practices for the purposes of learning. They carry literacies in pockets, prop them on carts and dashboards, inscribe them on bodies, and paste them on cars. They make literacy portable, or use the affordances of portable literacies to construct learning experiences that are self-directed, meet their goals, and fit their life conditions both within and outside of work.

If institutions and supervisors judge workers' literacy progress and motivation by participation in formal education opportunities like the ESL classes, they overlook a variety of participants' informal learning practices and capacities. Adult education programs have much to learn from practices adult learners are already pursuing to construct knowledge across conditions of movement in their lives. While education institutions should support this learning work, this study shows that participants pursue their learning agenda whether they receive institutional support or not. Participants ultimately want and need to trade their portable practices for institutionally and state-sanctioned materials like certificates or degrees, but they have also

cultivated practices that do not immediately depend upon institutional recognition or sanction.

This chapter demonstrates how individuals like the participants in this study—those who are so often constructed as “other” to the university—reflect the founding mission of public universities and the goals of a liberal arts education because they express a desire to learn for learning’s sake.

## Chapter 5

### **Conclusion: The Right to Write as an Expressive Workplace Practice**

This study began, for me, with questions that I thought were centered on the economy. I asked: how are those who are often left out of workplace writing studies experiencing writing in the information economy? What writing are they practicing and how might that be leveraged for their economic and social gain? Participants' practices and responses, however, suggested that I needed to reorient myself, not away from workplace writing but away from its presumed purpose. Participants were searching for ways to use literacy and writing in the workplace not only for workplace tasks but for expressing and negotiating emotional and intellectual problems in their lives—many of which remain deeply connected to conditions of migration, discrimination, and white supremacy. As such, this study follows a similar trajectory of recent transnational literacy studies that demonstrate how economies of literacy are bound up with the expressive like affect (Lagman) and love (Vieira). But this study also suggests that expression—emotional, spiritual, developmental, communicative—must be taken into account when theorizing workplace writing because, as a part of workplace practices and policies, regulating written expression is a tool of racial oppression.

This study challenges dominant conceptions of workplace writing, particularly in terms of its purpose, because it suggests workplace writing matters for more than employer profit and employee economic and social mobility. For participants, workplace writing mattered for its potential to help them grow and express themselves. Workplace writing restriction thus limits their ability to use writing to their desired ends at the same time that it upholds white dominance because it limits participants' ability to bring their narratives and knowledges to bear upon the

institution. To negotiate regulated workplace conditions that sought to uphold institutional race and class hierarchies, participants engaged in non-regulated writing practices that allowed them to express and extend their lived experiences in the workplace context. It was for these purposes, rather than simply workplace tasks or workplace mobility, that they expressed wanting to use writing and literacies. As a whole, this study suggests literacy matters in jobs that are not writing-intensive, jobs like custodial work that do not necessarily require writing to accomplish job tasks, in part because of its expressive potential. By expanding what counts as workplace writing to include not only writing for work but writing that happens in and around workplaces, scholars in writing studies can better understand how workers can use literacy for their own purposes to sustain themselves as a part of their working lives. As such, workplace writing can function not just as a way to uphold white supremacy but as a means to challenge white dominance in workplaces like education institutions.

To date, writing studies scholars have examined how the current economic, social, and political context has transformed how writing works in universities and workplaces more broadly. But questions about writers' experiences have largely coalesced around academic and writing-intensive labor. While these discussions remain incredibly important, they can center whiteness and obscure examinations of those who support but, because of their raced and classed status, are less closely aligned with university writing. This project seeks to reimagine what it looks and feels like to write and work in a university apart from white, middle-class conceptions of workplace writing. By considering how university custodians write and experience writing, universities and those who work in them are forced to confront their assumptions about who is entitled to reap the benefits of literacy resources in our educational institutions.

### **Interrogating Writing Access and Ownership in Universities**

Before any policy change can take effect for equitable purposes, university employees like academic laborers must face and address their own perceived entitlement to and surveillance of university writing materials. As participants testify, their experiences using such materials are shaped by the reactions of others working in university spaces. When I describe this study to people who have worked in educational institutions in positions outside of the custodial staff, I met resistance that generally fell into three categories. These instances can help inform how university staff become implicated in the inequitable distribution of labor and how scholars in the field, myself included, might reorient ourselves to constructions of writing in the university.

1. *Surprise and skepticism: Why wouldn't a university want custodial workers to write?* In this dissertation, I have argued that universities like the one in this study have a stake in resisting equitable distributions of writing in order to maintain race, class, and linguistic-based hierarchies. As writing becomes increasingly valuable in the information economy, the stakes for owning and controlling university writing may increase. While many university workers face increasing demands for writing, it is also important to recognize that writing is not a right awarded to all university workers.
2. *Excuses: I can understand why they [the university] wouldn't want them [custodians] using computers in offices, considering the work we [academics] do on them.*

This response more pointedly demonstrates an assertion of writing as property outside the rights of custodial staff. It demonstrates how writing-intensive work becomes a rationale for the exclusive and inherent right to writing materials (a contrast between the work “we” do with that which “they” do).

3. *Outliers: I heard a custodial worker abused technology to search for/write something “inappropriate.”*

These outlier narratives reflect a disproportionate amount of regulation and general moral judgement surrounding custodian writing activities as well as the speaker’s assumed entitlement to determine what is and is not appropriate use of writing materials. In my experience much of what is considered inappropriate for these workers has to do with using literacies for personal purposes—the kind of activities that those in writing-intensive positions also participate like responses to personal emails or phone calls but those that are less visible within writing-intensive work. By emphasizing outliers and extreme cases, these responses reflect a broader resistance to the equitable distribution of these writing resources to which they have an implied inherent right to own and control.

These responses only further underline how participants’ access to writing materials and practices cannot be separated from a broader university culture of institutional race and class discrimination upheld by administration but also by faculty, students, and staff. This project calls for all university participants to work in solidarity to transform university policies and culture to envision workplace writing beyond a white, middle-class entitlement.

Institutional culture shapes access to literacy materials. This study demonstrates how the racialized institutional regulation of writing materials matters because it interferes with participants’ literacy practices in ways that restrict their ability to reach personal and professional goals. As Roberto explained, you need to have the materials in order to learn how to use them. At the same time, providing access is difficult in a culture of institutional whiteness. Just as initiatives to add bodies of color to the university do not automatically create an inclusive or

equitable environment to sustain diversity (Patton; Ahmed), simply “allowing” custodians to use computers and other writing materials does not create a culture of access. Participant experiences show how university policies related to writing materials matter not only in isolation but in conjunction with other policies, including the messaging around them, and the ways they are taken up by others in the space. Being “allowed” to use the computer is meaningless in an institutional culture where those materials are constructed as supporting the use and enjoyment of those associated with whiteness.

Policy work could support custodians of color on campus. Workers of color, like students of color, need spaces outside of the white gaze. Within the specific institution I examined, non-managerial custodians have few spaces of their own and this shapes and often limits their experiences of writing. Non-managerial custodians share break rooms with academic staff, supply closets with the first shift, and meeting spaces with other university actors (who leave custodians to meet in the hallway when they choose to use the space). Neither public nor private university spaces belong to them. Due to issues like the racialized surveillance of computers, I see it as important to have a room of computers just for custodians. However, even this policy would not solve the problem of racial stratification within that space. Any such policies must be coupled with a broader cultural shift toward anti-racism on campus.

And while U.S. public universities invest an increasing amount of resources and publicity around their efforts to build campus-community partnerships, these partnerships generally construct the community as that which exists outside of the campus walls. This construction forwards the assumption that those who work on campus have access to all of its resources and obscures the fact that universities distribute and construct literacy resources inequitably. Outreach and campus-community partnerships are important components of a public mission,

but participants' experiences suggest that universities could also serve the public by re-envisioning themselves as public literacy spaces that equitably distribute their literacy resources to those who work not only outside but within the institution. Participants' experiences, however, demonstrate how they are currently constructed outside of the public and thus are not awarded participation in its public literacy mission. As such, any public literacy mission must begin by addressing how university cultures of white supremacy limit the extent to which university workers in particularly raced and classed positions can use writing for their own purposes in the institutional space.

### **Expressive Writing as Workplace Writing Preparation**

This study has implications for teaching writing in a university composition context that currently promotes workplace writing preparation. As writing has become a highly-demanded part of many jobs, writing studies scholars have highlighted that the way students learn about composition in the classroom vastly differs from how they experience it in the workplace. In particular, these scholars suggest composition teachers do a disservice to students when they continue to teach writing as a means to construct and express their identities because the workplace may not be conducive to such understandings and thus amplify workers feelings of alienation (Findlay, "When Writers"). Tensions between such composition theory (Elbow; Goldblatt) and workplace writing experiences offer important opportunities to talk with students about the ways in which the value and role of writing change over time. This study additionally presents an opportunity to bring composition theory and workplace writing experiences together because it considers workplace writing beyond narrow definitions of writing as a product for work. By redefining workplace writing to include informal inscription that takes place in the

context of work, this study offers opportunities to consider expressive writing that takes place in the context of work—even if it is not directly supporting workplace tasks.

As such, this study suggests that expressive writing may be an important component of workplace preparation because students can potentially learn to envision writing in the workplace as an anti-racist tool to challenge compromising work contexts. This idea has implications for but also beyond positions like custodial work. For example, in a corporate context, scholarship has shown how writing-intensive workers manage the emotional demands of highly-regulated and pressured writing work by writing with coworkers over instant messenger. These workers simultaneously used writing to share jokes with one another to manage the boredom and restrictions associated with their more tedious workplace writing (Findlay, “Uncommodified”). In the very different workplace context of this study, custodians write notes, wear tattoos, post signs, and dictate their stories in the context of work to similarly control their work experience and all of the emotional responses associated with their marginalized position. By tracing the similarities between such workplace writing, however, I do not mean to equate the conditions of those in positions of corporate workplace writer and university custodian. Those who participated in this study uniquely highlight how denying individuals the right to write in the workplace squanders opportunities to shape the way they experience and negotiate work conditions. While I agree that writing instruction should not romanticize writing as a purely expressive endeavor and must consider the impact and demands of more dominant workplace writing practices, I also argue that composition instructors work with students to consider who gets access to and control of expressive writing in work contexts and how such writing can be taught to help students sustain themselves as a part of their working lives. By considering workplace writing beyond narrow definitions of written products for work, it suggests expressive

writing could play a role in workplace writing preparation as a critical method for challenging white dominance in workplaces.

In a context that is both a race and class stratified workplace and an education institution, participants' stories highlight how writing should be a right, not only because of its connection to workplace mobility but because of its specifically expressive potential. While I have suggested some ways that public universities can interrogate their racist policies and practices around workplace writing to better fulfill their public mission, participants' experiences and non-regulated practices are particularly significant because they suggest workers can assert and express their lived experiences in ways that do not depend upon institutional support or recognition.

### **Conceptions of Race in Relation to Literacy Scholarship**

Finally, this dissertation expands conceptions of race in relation to literacy scholarship by showing how constructions and sponsorships of workplace writing contribute to racial stratification and reify institutional white dominance. As a whole, the dissertation shows how systemic racism shapes who can use writing in workplaces. It suggests that such regulation has consequences that extend beyond economic mobility to shape who has the right to express their lived experiences in those spaces. As such, the dissertation urges composition and rhetoric scholars to reconceptualize workplace writing to account for workers' practices as a part of broader vision for challenging white dominance in and beyond universities.

### **Looking Forward**

Moving forward, I would like to extend this project to more directly center and address the desires of participants. My dissertation focused on some of the restrictions and limitations participants faced in the institution. These restrictions around writing mattered because they

limited participants' abilities to fulfill their literacy desires—those like expressing workplace injustices, communicating with other employees, or recording their life-histories. With this in mind, I would now like to use what I have learned at another institution to collaboratively design institutional interventions with custodial staff through participatory action research (Fine; Patel; Bejarano et al.; Tuck and Yang). This research would address both the study design limitations of my dissertation as well as the limited sample size and context. At the second institution, I would like to design and conduct focus groups with other custodial staff to learn about their literacy desires within and outside of the institution and how institutional resources and experiences could better support their goals beyond the institution. It is my hope that this research will inform the content of direct actions which will be decided upon collaboratively with a coalition of custodial workers and may include recommendations and workshops for administrators at universities and a community literacy event.

University workers like custodians are often unable to benefit from the institution's many literacy resources because of race- and class-based hierarchies, but they are also often excluded from more public-facing community projects because they are technically part of the university. Universities need programs designed to bridge this gap. But those programs must be collaboratively designed with custodial staff in order to center their desires (Tuck) rather than those institutionally assumed for them. As I revise the dissertation project to write a book manuscript, I plan for it to make contributions to higher education policy, workplace literacy, and community literacy by drawing upon the dissertation and the participatory action research. I would also like to re-frame the project in terms of community literacy. I plan to use critical race theory (Ahmed; Ladson-Billings, "Just What"; Yosso; Martinez) to expand campus-community constructions to account for those like university custodians who are often excluded from

institutions' public literacy missions. I hope this community-engaged focus will allow me to more thoroughly focus on participants' experiences beyond the institution. Ultimately, the aim of the book would be to reimagine how public literacy institutions such as universities can better and more equitably support public literacies.

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## Appendix A: Interview Protocol

### Classified Employee Interview Protocol

#### *Personal Demographics and Background*

- When were you born?
- Where were you born? Where did you grow up?
- In a sentence or two, how would you describe yourself?
- What would you like your pseudonym to be?
- How much/What kind of schools did you attend?
- When and how did you learn to read and write?
- What languages do you speak? When and how did you learn those languages?

#### *University Experience*

- How long have you worked at the university? In what capacity?
- Are you involved in any groups associated with the university like the union?
- Take me through a typical day at work.
- When and how do you talk, read, write at work?
- When you write, who is your audience? (Who are you writing for?)
- What role do does talking, reading, writing play?
- Do you ever use computers at work? Would it be helpful? For what activities?
- How has what you need to do in terms of reading, writing, talking changed since you started working at the university?
- Describe an experience when you found reading, writing, talking helpful at work. (Who was involved? Where were you? What materials did you use? How long did it take?)
- Describe a time it felt difficult to complete writing at work. (Who was involved? Where were you? What materials did you use? How long did it take?) What made it difficult? How did you go about trying to figure it out?
- Who or what helps you read, write, talk at work?
- When do you think the most important part of your job is?
- How do you know when you are doing a good job?
- What prevents you from reading, writing, talking at work?
- What would you have to change in order to change that?
- How does your writing affect other people or services at the university?
- Pretend that I am a new employee, what advice would you give me about writing on the job?

#### *Other*

- What questions do you have for me?
- What would you like your pseudonym to be?

## University Employee Supervisor Interview Protocol

### *University Experience*

- How long have you worked at the university? In what capacity?
- How important a role does writing (and/or reading) play in your current job?
- What kind of writing (and/or reading) do you do?

### *Classified Employee Writing Practices*

- What kind of writing (and/or reading) do your employees do? (Forms, Memos, Emails, Other)
- What materials and spaces do they use to write (and/or read)?
- What is the most important kind of reading/writing that they do? Why is it the most important?
- What kind of training do they receive? Who provides that training?
- How do you support their writing practices (their reading practices?)
- How do you communicate that they have done a good job with those practices?
- What do you think your employees need to read and write well?
- How do you know when they need assistance with reading and writing?
- What kind of problems do employees face with reading and writing?
- How do you help them solve those problems?
- What do you think motivates employees to read and write at work?
- How does their work affect other people or services at the university?
- What ideas do you have for how the university can better support their workers?

### *Other*

- What questions do you have for me?

### *Personal Demographics and Background*

- How do you identify  
Gender  
Race
- In a sentence or two, how would you describe yourself?
- What would you like your pseudonym to be?

### Appendix B: Participant Background and Data Collection

	Age	Years Working At the University	Country of Origin	Data Collection
Henry	50's	Did not disclose in the interview but >10 years	Cuba	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with interpreter</li> <li>• Shift observation</li> <li>• Participant video and photograph collection</li> </ul>
Javier	50's	<20	Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with interpreter</li> <li>• Shift observation</li> <li>• Participant video and photograph collection</li> </ul>
Jesus	50's	<20	Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simultaneous interview with shift observation</li> </ul>
Marco	30	>1	Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Shift observation</li> <li>• Participant video and photograph collection</li> </ul>
Roberto	Late 30's	>1	Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Shift observation</li> </ul>
Tómas	50's	17	Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Simultaneous interview with shift observation</li> </ul>